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Memoir of David Coulter...

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MEMOIR

OF

DAVID COULTER, D. D.

WITH

Reminiscences,
Letters,
Lectures and Sermons.

ST. LOUIS:
Presbyterian Publishing Company, 207 N. 8th St.

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PREFACE.

A few months before his death, Rev. David Coulter, D. D., wrote, or more correctly speaking, dictated to his wife, who was his amanuensis during the years of his partial blindness, a sketch of his life. This he did without any expectation that it would ever meet the public eye. After his decease, a friend was permitted to read this "sketch," and being both interested and profited by its perusal, and desirous that others might have the same pleasure and profit, obtained the consent of Mrs. Coulter to have it published in a series of numbers in the *St. Louis Presbyterian*. This was done, and the acceptance with which the sketch was received by the old and the young, and the desire expressed by many to have it in a more permanent form, have led to the publication of this volume.

The lectures addressed to the young, and the sermons on various subjects, will be no less welcomed by the reader. Dr. Coulter had few equals in presenting the truths of the Gospel, doctrinal and practical. His many friends and admirers will be more than delighted to have the privilege of reading this much of the life and writings of their deceased friend, and even strangers can but be edified with the perusal. Two classes of readers ought especially to be profited, young men in their preparatory studies for the ministry, and young ministers seeking fields of labor. This volume is sent forth not for the critic's eye: but with many prayers, and with firm faith, that it will prove a rich legacy to the Church of God.

W. W. R.

INTRODUCTION.

It was my privilege, to be long acquainted, and for many years intimately associated, with Rev. Dr. Coulter. To know him as I did, was to love him for the nobility of his Christian character, and to honor him for the work he accomplished. From the windows of the room in which this tribute to his worth and memory is offered, the writer can look out into the streets of the town where the closing years of his life were spent. In imagination he can almost be seen, as he was often seen during those years, sometimes walking alone the rounds of busy concern for others; sometimes in his blindness, on errands of good will to men, guided by the hand of his faithful and devoted wife. Here are the houses he was accustomed to enter, in which he offered so many words of wise counsel, and poured forth the voice of prayer, in behalf of the diseased souls and bodies of his fellow-beings.

There is a touch of true heroism in that persistence which prompts a man, bereft of sight, so far to forget his own affliction as to grope his way in darkness that he may carry the cup of blessing to another. To be willing to bear the burden of another's woes, where we might, with all seeming propriety, invoke sympathy in our own behalf, is a state of mind indicative of hearty subjection to "the law of Christ." It is an attainment so rare in this world of selfishness, that when we see it illustrated, we at once conclude it is something, not of "the earth, earthy," but something bearing "the image of the heavenly." This attainment was conspicuous in the life and character of Dr. Coulter. As his years drew to a close, it became so much a part of his nature to undertake for others,

that the Spirit of the Divine Master, it may be said, almost unconsciously to him, became the abiding Spirit of His servant. What many would regard as an act of great self-denial, our dear departed brother would have "counted all joy," for Christ's sake and the good of men.

The history of a true Christian life, as it will be found in the pages following, can not fail to interest deeply the devout and thoughtful reader. Such a life belongs not alone to the Church. Such a life is a legacy to the world. Such a life, though it may seem to some uneventful, is nevertheless a power. It is one of the amazing forces that sweep on and on, in the moral and spiritual world, until the grand sum of all shall be found recorded, on that day of reckoning, in the completed book of human destiny. The power of a good man's life—a Christian's life—is not to be estimated by the startling and stormy events connected with it, and as we, with our partial vision, observe it. Much that is forceful and ultimately rounding out in blessed results, is not seen or appreciated by multitudes. It is true, in the world of nature, that the quiet, noiseless forces are those that are most potential, and, we may also say, most needful for human good. The dew and the gently falling shower are better for shrub and flower and the drooping verdure, than the wild mountain torrent. The soft breezes, as they fan the cheek of the pale invalid, or the weary traveler by the wayside, are far more grateful than the rushing tornado. The mild warmth of the sun in the spring-time is more to be desired than the parching fervors of summer. One roaring Niagara, with its mighty dash and plunge of waters, is enough for a continent or a world. But we need thousands of quiet, noiseless little streams to flow among the vallies and meadows, if we would have them to smile in beauty and fruitfulness. We need them, not only to give fertility to the soil, but to furnish drink for man and other creatures that God has made. So in this unhappy world, where there is so much raging of noise and strife and angry passions, and where so many aspire to be demi-gods of fame, it is needful that there should be those who, in the gentle spirit of their loving Lord, are found quietly "going about doing good." Such as these, after all, are the mighty factors which God employs in the upbuilding of the blood-bought Church of Jesus. Take away these quiet workers in the

cause of Truth and Righteousness; dry up these gentle streams that flow through the parched deserts of humanity; stop these voices which day by day are speaking in low tones, to sorrowing men and women, the name of the crucified One, and there will come upon the world a night of despair.

Dr. Coulter was one of these quiet workers. His influence in every community where he lived and labored, as will be seen in his Biography, left its impress for good upon many hearts. Like the Master whom he served, he did "not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street." He sought no notoriety; he craved no honor or applause from men. It was his aim to "magnify his office," as Paul did, in order that he might "magnify Christ." No man could deal more tenderly with "the bruised reed" than he did. How many hearts he comforted, how many wounded spirits he bound up with the balm of the Gospel, how many despairing ones he pointed to the sinner's Savior, will never be known to any but God, until the "Books are opened." The life of such a man could not fail to be eventful, in the best meaning of that word. Every day witnessed some planning and execution for the cause of Christ. Every day, there was new unfolding of desire to serve both God and man; and every day, we may believe, there was a ripening for the world of glory. If then, as we have intimated, we may not hear the roar of the Niagara in his life, we may hear the softer, sweeter music of the gently rippling stream, murmuring the blessed strain of salvation to all who came near him. "The good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that be otherwise, cannot be hid." "While the Christian may pursue with interest the history of the menta and moral development of those who are termed "the great men" of the world, he will not fail to rejoice, with the angels of God, more "over a single sinner that repents," to follow with more intense interest the progress of a work of grace in the humblest child of God, and to find in the changes and events, the conflicts and victories, the sorrows and joys, the fears and hopes, there transpiring, matter of more importance and instruction, than in the rise and fall of despotic Kings and Princes, or of wicked empires and nations."

The Presbyterian men and women of Missouri, and indeed, Christians of every name, who felt the force of Dr. Coulter's presence in

his words and acts, at different times, during the course of his long ministry, will doubtless be pleased to have the opportunity of reading this book. They will thus get a deeper insight into the secret of that character which so effectually challenged their respect and reverence. And may we not hope that many, who had not the privilege of a personal acquaintance with him, and who never heard his voice uttering itself in the high argument of the Gospel, will be induced to take up this volume, and trace the lines of a life that was broad enough to embrace within its scope the best interests of man for two worlds.

In the auto-biographical part of this work, the reader will find away back in the early years of the subject of it, the evidence of a persistence of purpose to achieve results under difficulties, which must awaken admiration, and which may well become an inspiration to others, who are confronted, at the starting point of their career, with obstacles of like character. The lectures and sermons will be found rich in thought and full of the unction of the Spirit. The book throughout should be prized by the Church he served so long, as a precious testimony to the worth and fidelity of one whose life and ministry were in such beautiful harmony, and whose "record is on high." The work has been brought before the public through the liberality of Brother Coulter's widow, who devotes the *entire* proceeds of its sale to the aid of Westminster College an institution of learning always dear to the heart of her noble husband. Its extensive circulation will therefore accomplish a two-fold benefit. It will serve to quicken the spiritual life of many of God's people, and it will render important aid to the cause of sound Christian education.

With the prayer that the Divine blessing may accompany this book as it goes into the families of our beloved Church, and profoundly thankful to the great King in Zion that He has afforded me the opportunity of presenting this humble tribute to the life and character of one whom I greatly loved, and whose friendship I shall cherish to all eternity, I commend the Biography and Discourses of our lamented Brother, to all who love the image of Christ as it is seen in those who "follow Him in the Regeneration."

JNO. G. FACKLER.

LIBERTY, MO.

Autobiographical Sketch

of

Rev. David Coulter, D. D.

PART I.

CHILDHOOD.

NOVEMBER 8th, 1808, was the day of my birth. The place of this occurrence was in the State of Delaware, Sussex county, about ten miles east of Georgetown, the county-seat, and seven miles west of Lewestown, whose outlook is the Bay of Delaware, where it widens out between Cape Henlopen and Cape May into the broad Atlantic. The home of my parents was a comfortable farm house, about one mile south of Cool Spring Presbyterian church, of which my parents were members, and where, in my infancy, as a child of the covenant, I was baptized.

The name of my father was Jesse, and that of my mother, Elizabeth. They were both righteous before God, endeavoring to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. They gave to their son the name of David, hoping that its Scriptural associations might exert a happy influence in the formation of his character. My personal recollection of my father is very indis-

tinct, as he departed this life before I had completed my fourth year. I am persuaded, however, from incidents related to me by my mother, and from records of the exercise of his mind which I have read, that he was a man of earnest piety. My early training, with that of a younger sister, was almost wholly the work of my sainted mother. I have a very distinct recollection of her pleadings with a covenant-keeping God, as she knelt with us in prayer — herself in front and her children on either side of the same chair — in her daily devotions. Her look and the tones of her voice are still vividly present with me. Her instructions, drawn from the word of divine truth, tenderly and earnestly given, are yet fresh in my memory. Her corrections, administered with faithfulness, and sometimes with a tearful eye, accompanied with prayer, can never be forgotten.

Bibles were not as accessible then as now. I well remember when returning from school in my eighth year, I was met by my sister with the glad intelligence that "the Bibles have come." My mother, together with some other heads of families in the neighborhood, in order that each of the younger members of their households might possess a Bible of their own, sent to Philadelphia for them. They were very plain copies of the Sacred Scriptures, but cost each one dollar and four cents. We waited with anxiety the coming of an uncle, who was a merchant, that he might

write, in the place provided, our respective names. That Bible is still in my possession. The next thing was to read it through, and there was an effort between us, as to who should first report the task accomplished. My mother procured for me other books; among them were "Janeway's Token for Children," "Pilgrim's Progress," "Life of John Newton," also miscellaneous works of Charles Buck. These were all borrowed from neighbors and acquaintances, and were on this account the more valued. There were in my mother's possession, Hervey's works, Doddridge's "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," Dickinson's "Five Points," with some other works, which, as I grew older, I read with much interest.

The Rev. Joseph Copes, of blessed memory, was pastor of the Cool Spring church, and gave much attention to catechetical instruction of the children. He encouraged them also to commit portions of Scripture and hymns, which he would hear them repeat before public service on Sabbath mornings, accompanying the exercise with suitable instruction. From time to time, also, he would present us with Narrative Tracts, which we highly prized. He served three congregations: Lewes, Indian River and Cool Spring. My mother and her little family were constant attendants at the latter place. When there was no preaching, a service was conducted by the excellent Session, consisting of prayers, singing and

the reading of a sermon. It was required of me to remember the text, and also as much as I could of the sermon. I seldom failed in regard to the first, but my reports of the latter were generally quite meager. My mother expressed much pleasure when I could repeat as much as a single sentence.

She sometimes visited at the parsonage, taking my sister and myself with her. These occasions were highly prized by us, and we seldom returned without bringing with us some memento in the shape of a tract or card with a hymn printed on it. Once I remember, while in the pastor's study, I was reading Fox's "Book of Martyrs." He asked me if I could endure, out of love to Christ, what they suffered? Not being able to answer the question in the affirmative, I made but little reply, but the question kept running through my mind for sometime afterwards. At another time, with two of his own sons, we read alternately a portion of Scripture. At the close, he asked me what I had been reading about. Not expecting to be examined, I was able to report scarcely anything, at which I felt very much embarrassed and ashamed.

Sometimes, when he would be going from church in the direction of my home, he would take me up in his sulky and examine me in the Catechism as we rode along. He needed no book for this exercise, and could ask the questions readily and regularly from memory.

Once he gave me a hymn-book with this inscription on the fly-leaf: "To David Coulter, for his faithful attention to the study of the Catechism. May the blessing of his ancestors rest upon him, through Jesus Christ." His manner of responding to inquiries about his health usually was, "Well, through mercy." I went to see him with my mother during his last sickness. He spoke to me concerning my covenant relation to the Church. I did not well understand his meaning, but his words impressed me deeply. The day on which he was buried, was a sad one to his people. My mother, I recollect, made the remark, that tears enough had been shed to have washed him all over. He was brought to the church, prayers were offered, and a sermon was read by a member of the Session. One of the elders remarked, holding up the Bible, "Our light-bearer is gone, but the light of the divine Word still remains." He exhorted us to give it the more earnest and prayerful study. Mr. Copes' remains were interred a little east of the south door of the church. On his tomb may be read this inscription:

> "In yonder sacred house I spent my breath;
> Now silent, mouldering here, I lie in death:
> But I shall rise again, and yet declare
> A dread amen to truths I published there."

Surrounded, as I was, by such influences, and instructed by such teachers, it is not surprising that I should become very early impressed with

the things pertaining to my eternal interest. I was taught to pray almost from infancy, and I can remember, when quite a little boy on my way to school, of turning aside from my path and kneeling down under the shadow of a great oak, and there endeavoring to seek a blessing from my Heavenly Father. My mother sometimes spoke to me of Christian experience and of the comfort of trust in the promises in the divine word, saying, though I understood not these things now, she hoped they would not always be strange to me. On one occasion, hearing me sing a devotional hymn, she asked me if those words expressed my feelings. She often encouraged me to carry all my difficulties to the throne of grace, and daily commit myself to divine protection and guidance, impressing her counsel by her example. Once I remember, when a storm was raging, the rain descending in torrents, the forked lightning darting vividly and almost blindingly through our dwelling, and terrific peals of thunder were following in quick succession, she called her children to her, and kneeling down, poured forth earnest supplication unto Him whose way is in the storm, and who controls the elements at His will. At another time, she spoke of having been much troubled with gloomy forebodings respecting the future in regard to temporal matters. She said she had been kept awake, and sitting up until a late hour at night on this account, when opening

her Bible, she read the passage, "casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." This so relieved her mind, that she at once committed all to her Heavenly Father's care — laid herself down — had a good night's rest, and from that time had but little anxiety on that subject.

I continued to be thoughtful in regard to my spiritual welfare, not only in my waking hours, but also in my dreams by night. Once I thought that the day of judgment had come. I saw the sheeted lightning sweeping over the earth with the rapidity of thought, leaving all behind in a blaze of fire. The scene was so terrific that I awoke, thinking what would have been my portion if the dream had been a reality. At another time, I dreamed that I was in the church, where were gathered the dead that had been buried in the surrounding graveyard. I saw our dead minister there, sitting on a seat next the pulpit, while the dead congregation occupied the pews. The stillness was dreadful, but while I stood in awe, the dead minister slowly rose up, trembling dreadfully. Then the dead congregation rose up also trembling. At this stage of the vision, my sleep went from me. Some years since, I told this dream to an old minister, when he remarked, "That when dead preachers begin to tremble before their people in view of the judgment, as knowing the terrors of the Lord, then their dead congregations will begin to tremble also."

Some time after this, my grandmother Coulter died. She was a quiet, godly woman, not given to much speaking in regard to her religious experience, but I had much confidence in the genuineness of her piety. I did not see her during her last sickness, which I regretted, especially when I was told that she had expressed a desire for my presence. She entered the stream of death, as I was informed, clinging to her Savior, but with a degree of fear and trembling. The event, for a time, produced a serious impression upon my mind.

Not long after this, a cousin, a year or two my senior, died. He was taken suddenly very ill, and in a short time became speechless, and seemed to be both blind and deaf, and thus continued till he died. He had made a profession of religion, which was a source of great comfort to his afflicted parents. My mother was present on the occasion, and when she came home, described to me, in a very tender and solemn manner, the distressing scene through which she had passed, endeavoring to impress me with the importance of being also ready, not knowing in what hour my summons might come. This event also served to deepen my anxious impressions.

PART II.

YOUTH.

I HAVE now brought my narrative, in some of its incidents, beyond my twelfth year. Much of the time, up to that period, had been spent at school under the tuition of a variety of teachers, most of whom were men of piety, and endeavored, with intellectual training, to inculcate moral and religious principles. The Scriptures were read as a school-book, and in some schools the Westminster Catechism was studied and recited. One of the teachers, who was son-in-law to our minister, opened and closed the exercises of each day with prayer. On one of these occasions, two of the boys were heard whispering. As soon as the service was closed, they were called to an account; one of them denied being guilty, but as it was proved upon him, he was severely reproved. When he returned home, he felt so uncomfortable that he was obliged to tell his parents all about it. This, I have no doubt, was of great benefit to him, for I am fully persuaded that if children

would always report to their parents their faults, it would greatly fortify them against temptation and strengthen them in habits of virtue.

About the close of my twelfth year, I went out to service on a farm with the family of my uncle. As I was the oldest child and only son in my mother's family, I had been treated with a tenderness and consideration not to be expected even in the house of a relative. I felt very sensibly the change. As I was the youngest as well as smallest among the boys belonging to the family, it fell to my lot to engage in rather irregular work. This made me feel that I occupied an inferior position, and was very humbling to my pride. I ventured to speak to my mother of my difficulties. She sympathized with me, but told me that I ought to be thankful that my uncle was willing to take me, and added that if I did my duty faithfully, my Heavenly Father would provide for me a more exalted position in due time. I gradually became reconciled, began to take more pleasure in my work, and even to regard it as rather a favor than a hardship, that I had to work so much alone. I always went home on Saturday night and remained until Monday morning, and sometimes even in the week I would spend a night or two with my mother and sister. Indeed, while my mother lived, I never felt really at home unless I was in her house.

Some months after the death of our old minister,

our pulpit was supplied by Rev. B. F. Ogden. He was a man of great simplicity of character. One of the elders remarked, that "there was no harm in him." He could not talk to the children, however, like our former pastor. He declined to hear the Catechism before the morning service, because it would interfere with his preaching. He, however, formed a Bible class and heard it immediately after sermon. Several members of the congregation, and I among the number, engaged in this exercise. I do not know that it was of any particular advantage to me, except that it brought me into more intimate acquaintance with our new minister.

In process of time, our minister appointed a communion service, and gave notice that on the Thursday preceding, there would be a prayer-meeting in the church, as a means of special preparation for the solemn occasion. After the usual exercises of reading the Scriptures and of prayer and praise, one of the elders remarked, that "if there were any persons present who desired special prayer in their behalf and would indicate their wish, the services would be prolonged for that purpose." No person made the request, but a very serious feeling seemed to pervade the assembly.

After I went home, my mother inquired of me, if I did not feel the time had come for me to make a public profession of my faith in Christ—

telling me, at the same time, that she had learned with much pleasure that my sister had made up her mind to take that step. I told her that I did not feel that my experience justified me to do so—that I had not that assurance of a change of heart which I supposed was requisite to make me a person suitable to join the church. She endeavored to instruct me in the matter, and directed me to pray that the good Lord would guide me in the way I ought to go. I endeavored to do as she advised, and after much thought, I presented myself before the Session with the view of giving them a full statement of the exercises of my mind upon the subject. The minister met me cordially and expressed his gratification that so many of the members of his Bible class were desirous to connect themselves with the church. This remark was made from the fact, that four or five young persons, who were connected with the Bible class, had a short time previously met the Session, as I was now doing. After I made my statement of my religious exercises, one of the elders remarked, that "the life was more to be regarded than the history of one's feelings." My uncle stated that my general conduct had been that of a moral, conscientious person, but in regard to my spiritual exercises, he had not known or observed anything particular. The Session, however, voted to receive me into the communion of the church.

They gave me a token, as it was called: this was a small piece of lead, flat and square in form, which was inscribed with the letters, L. T., standing for "love token." These were given to the communicants as an evidence of their good standing in the church, and of their privilege to come to the Lord's table. They were usually distributed the day preceding and on the morning of the day of communion, by the elders, and were returned to them just after the communicants were seated at the table. The use of them has long since been discontinued in our Church.

The next day my mother and her children sat down together at the table of our blessed Lord, and I have no doubt that her heart exclaimed with no ordinary emotion, "here am I and the children which thou hast graciously given to thy handmaid." It was customary to have long narrow tables, reaching across the church, at which the communicants were seated. The minister stood at what was called the head of the table, distributing the elements to those who sat nearest to him; then the elders slipped the plates along the table for the convenience of the members. The minister all the time addressing them with words of counsel or exhortation. When one table had been thus served, a hymn was sung, during which those who had communed retired to the pews, and others occupied their places at the table. Sometimes there were three or four tables,

at the last of which the colored people were invited to come and take their place. The whole was concluded with an earnest exhortation, and the congregation was dismissed, after singing a hymn, with the benediction.

I do not recollect very specially the exercise of my mind on that day of my first communion, but I remember very distinctly on the following day, when I was at work alone, I was very deeply concerned about my new position. I felt I had opened my mouth unto the Lord, and could not go back without great aggravation of guilt, and felt afraid I might not walk worthy of my high vocation. I knew I had no strength in myself, and could but feebly take hold of the divine promises for support and guidance. I was well aware that all my help must come from God, and my earnest desire was that He would hold me up. This was in the Fall of 1825.

In that same year, our minister came to reside in the neighborhood of my mother, and boarded with a family about a quarter of a mile distant. During that winter he had a very severe spell of sickness, and came near the gate of death. My mother, who was an excellent nurse, waited upon him in his illness, spending almost her entire time in the family. While she was there, she was attacked, between midnight and day, with a severe chill. Word was sent to me at my uncle's before it was light, to hasten home and build a large fire

and heat water, as my mother was very sick, and wished to be taken to her own dwelling. I did as requested, and watched for her coming. By the time it was light, I saw a carriage start from the house where she was, but instead of coming to her home, it took the direction towards my uncle's. Soon a messenger was sent to bid me hasten to her. I was soon at her bedside, found her in great pain, but calm and collected. By the time a physician could be obtained, she was almost unconscious, her pulse was gone, and though she swallowed the strongest kind of stimulus, it produced no effect. It was evident she was near her end. We stood around her bed watching the ebbing of life's current until about two o'clock, when she ceased to breathe. Thus passed away to her home in heaven, a redeemed spirit as pure and true as was ever lent to earth.

My sister and I wept over her as those who felt themselves doubly orphans. The family of my uncle mingled their tears with ours, as those who mourn for kindred near and dear. My uncle stood like a statue of grief, or walked to and fro as one stunned and bewildered by sudden bereavement, but no tears came to his relief. He had been my mother's counselor during her long years of widowhood, was often at her home, and seemed much to enjoy her company. He said she was a mother in Israel. The next day, after appropriate funeral services, she was taken to the burying

ground connected with the church, and laid beside her husband and her first-born, to await the resurrection of the just. The spot is a few paces a little west of south from the front door of the church.

My uncle took charge of the estate, and the home of my childhood was soon inhabited by others. I continued to live with my uncle as I had before. My sister found a home in the family of another uncle, who was the husband of my mother's younger sister. This occurred February, 1826. I continued with my uncle thus about four years. Sometimes during the winter I assisted in a school, and one winter I taught a school of which I was principal.

In the Spring of 1829, my sister and myself concluded to take charge of our little farm, and gathering together a few articles of household furniture, commenced house-keeping. My uncle, with whom my sister lived, remarked, as we set out from his house, that, in order to good housekeeping, we must have a family altar. Accordingly, that night we kneeled together in the same room, where, in years before, we had often kneeled with our sainted mother.

We had now another minister, the Rev. John Mitchelmore. He took much interest in our affairs. He was a very genial man, and the congregation was very much devoted to him. He loaned me some books to read, among others,

"Henry on Prayer," with the view of my obtaining help from it in the way of taking part in public prayer. Not long after this, our minister, according to previous arrangement, called upon me to make the closing prayer. I did so with a great deal of trepidation, but was enabled to go through with the exercise with quite as much freedom as I had any reason to expect. I had before opened the exercises of our Sabbath-school, so it was not entirely new to me to pray in the presence of others. Some time after this, I was called on to conduct the Sabbath services at the church, which was to read a sermon at the Sabbath prayer-meeting. This was the beginning of my public exercises, which was enlarged by my offering a word of exhortation, especially when our meetings were held in private families. These meetings were blessed to the drawing out of some other young men to take part in the exercises of public prayer.

We had also a Tract Society, and with others, I became very much interested in the circulation of tracts — indeed, I scarcely went anywhere without taking some with me, and offering them to any acquaintance whom I might meet. This sometimes opened the way for religious conversation.

Much interest was awakened at this time on the subject of Temperance. Societies were formed for the promotion of that cause. I was then

teaching school, and hearing that a mass-meeting was to be held at Lewestown on the subject, I determined to prepare a speech, and attend at the time appointed. I went to the house of our minister, who lived at the place, told him I had come to attend the meeting, and if there was an opportunity, and he thought it advisable, I would make an address. The meeting was presided over by Caleb Rodney, ex-Governor of the State, who, after making some remarks upon that passage of Scripture which treats upon the responsibility and duty of the man owning an ox, which he knew was in the habit of pushing with his horns and doing damage, and applying it to the subject in hand, concluded by saying, if there was any person in the house desirous of taking part in the discussion, the way was now open for him to proceed. Upon my expressing my wish to do so, I was invited to the front. I was unknown to most of the persons present. The house was filled. I was dressed in home-spun. It seemed a novel thing, and as the eyes of the audience were earnestly fixed upon me, I felt a little embarrassed. But as my speech was all "cut and dried," I delivered it without hesitation, and had the most profound attention from beginning to end.

After further remarks by other speakers, signers were called for, and quite a number of names were added to the pledge. The wife of the tavern keeper, I understood, was much moved by some

of my remarks, and went home anxious for her husband to throw away the stock of liquors on hand, and deal no longer in the injurious traffic. I was heralded at once as an earnest advocate of the cause of Temperance, and requested to repeat my address at an early day in the town of Melton, some eight or ten miles distant. This was my first beginning in speech making on the subject of Temperance, which has continued, under various circumstances, from that time until the present.

My farming operations were on a small scale. My stock consisted of one yoke of oxen, one cow, a few pigs and a half dozen sheep. The oxen I raised from calves, one of which was given to me by my mother and the other by an uncle. The cow I bought for ten dollars. The beginning of my stock of hogs was given to me by my cousin. The neighbors gave us some chickens, and one of the ex-Governors of the State, at whose store I traded, gave me a crowing one, that I might know, as he pleasantly remarked, when to get up. My farming utensils were of rather a primitive kind. A cart, or two wheel vehicle, costing eight dollars — a plough of the old bar-share pattern — a harrow with three teeth, worth about one dollar and a half. I had also a hoe, spade and an ax. The farm consisted of about seventy acres. The soil was thin, and so light that it was sometimes said, that "even our landed property was movable." And it did seem so,

when, in the fall and winter, one beheld the great clouds of dust carried by the wind from our cultivated fields. I cultivated about twenty-five or thirty acres, which rarely averaged more than a barrel of corn per acre. Very little of it would produce wheat, except when fresh or well manured. We, however, lived comfortably, and increased in means a little every year.

In the winter I usually taught school, receiving as compensation, from twelve to fifteen dollars per month. After we had lived thus for about two years, my sister taught a summer school some four or five miles distant from home. I had, therefore, to look out for a house-keeper, and employed one. She was a very kind-hearted old woman, a member of the Methodist Church. We got along very pleasantly, although it was quite a change from having with me a sister. I gave her her board for doing my cooking and house-work. She had the rest of her time to work for herself. She was a good seamstress, and sometimes found employment by taking in sewing. When not thus occupied, she worked for me and I gave her a dollar and a half per month. During that summer, my sister made the acquaintance of a gentleman, to whom, in about a year after, she was married. She returned home in the Fall and lived with me until she was married. She was then in her twentieth year. She and her husband removed to Philadelphia,

where she died in her twenty-seventh year, and was interred in the burial ground of the Sixth Presbyterian church of that city.

After my sister's marriage, my old house-keeper returned again and continued with me until I closed my farming operations.

PART III.

AT COLLEGE.

I DO not remember when I first indulged the idea of becoming a minister of the Gospel. I had from my childhood a great reverence for those who were in that sacred office. This was increased as I advanced in years. Pious relations and visitors at my mother's, would sometimes suggest to her in my hearing, that I might one day be a minister. This was said in connection with my recital of hymns and passages of Scripture, at the request of my mother. I was also very fond of reading, and this induced them to think that I might improve opportunities given me to obtain a suitable education. After the death of my mother, I visited our minister who was convalescent, but yet unable to go abroad. I had a long conversation with him. He spoke much of the piety of my mother, and gave me much advice. He loaned me "Baxter's Saints' Rest," and encouraged me to read it carefully, and try to make a practical use of its suggestions. I do not remember that he said

anything to me specially about the ministry, but he impressed me with the importance of striving to be useful. As my ideal of a useful life was the ministerial work, my thoughts were of course led in that direction. After this, an old minister by the name of Woodbridge came to labor in the bounds of Lewes Presbytery, and stopped for a few days at the house of my uncle. I was then teaching school. He visited the school, and made an address to the children. He talked to me a good deal about my condition as an orphan. He also encouraged me to hope that, by diligent attention and improvement of opportunities, I might, by the blessing of God, become instrumental in doing much good. The frequent exercise of my gift in exhortation at prayer-meetings, led the people to expect that I would one day become a minister. Their remarks upon this subject were frequently repeated in my hearing; I was also told that our minist r, Mr. Mitchelmore, expressed the same idea. These external influences made considerable impression upon my mind, and led me to make the matter the subject of very serious consideration. I felt a growing desire for the work. One day, one of the elders incidentally remarked to me, he believed we had no poets among us. I replied that I had sometimes tried to make verses, and would hand him some of my efforts. One of the pieces, I remem-

ber, had relation to my desire for the ministry, and thus began:

I ask no greater joy,
Than Jesus to proclaim;
To spread through all the earth abroad
The honor of His name.

It was also with me a subject of prayer. There was a beautiful pine grove about a quarter of a mile from the house in which I lived, to which I sometimes went for meditation and devotion. This question was often the subject that occupied my mind in that quiet retreat.

My great difficulty was in obtaining an education. There were some things that gave me encouragement. One of these was the information that the Church, through her Board of Education, often extended assistance to young men in indigent circumstances, when application was made, accompanied by proper recommendation. Another encouraging fact was, that one of my cousins had, by the divine blessing, worked his way into the ministry, with but little means contributed by his parents. Another circumstance was, that I was now alone in the world, my sister having married, so there seemed no particular difficulty in the way of my taking advantage of any opening that might be made in the direction of my desire.

About this time I learned that there was a Manual Labor Institution at Easton, Pennsylvania, of which Rev. George Junkin, D. D., was President.

I was told that a young man disposed to labor part of his time, might thus defray a considerable portion of his expenses. I therefore wrote to Dr. Junkin, stating my wishes and circumstances. This was in the latter part of the winter of 1833. He replied that the way was open for me to come; and that if I could make my arrangements to be there at the close of the present session, which would take place the last of March, he could give me employment during the vacation. Accordingly, I made arrangements for a sale of my personal property, and was ready to go at the time suggested.

My effects amounted to two hundred and thirty dollars, and with this I set out for College. I never had been from home more than thirty miles before—had never been out of my own native State of Delaware, and hence the journey was quite an undertaking. The first part of it was by water to Philadelphia, ninety miles, and by stage sixty miles, to the Forks of the Delaware, to the city of Easton. On my way, I remained a day or two in Philadelphia, at the house of a lady relative, by the name of Smith. Her husband was at that time a Presiding Elder in the Methodist Church. I told him I had much to learn yet, and it might be, after further study, my doctrinal views might be somewhat modified. He seemed pleased with the intimation that my mind was open to conviction, and told me not to be afraid to read good books, wherever I might find them.

During my stay in the city, I was passing a graveyard and seeing a funeral procession enter in, I went with them. The minister in attendance made some impressive remarks which led me to inquire who he was. I was told he was the Rev. Ezra Styles Ely, D. D. He was at that time one of the most wealthy and influential ministers in the Presbyterian Church. His munificent contributions to the Church were of general notoriety. He afterwards emigrated to Missouri, where, in consequence of some unprofitable speculations, he lost almost the whole of his property. I saw him after this, when he told me he was going back to the East, where, if the Lord would give him a congregation, he would spend the remainder of his days preaching the Gospel. I was reminded of a remark made by the Rev. Dr. Gray, of Easton, who, in speaking of some of Dr. Ely's speculations both in property and theology, which he thought savored of worldliness and pride, said, "if the Dr. is as good a man as I think he is, the Lord will humble him."

The place of my lodging was a long way from the hotel whose sign was the "Golden Swan," from which the stage started to Easton. Fearing I might be left, as the stage was to start at four o'clock in the morning, I arose about one, and set out for the place of starting. My trunk had been taken the day before to the office. As I was trudging along with a sack on my back, containing some

clothes, by a station-house, I was suddenly halted by a policeman, demanding who I was and where I was going at that hour of the night. I felt a little startled, but proceeded to answer his questions as calmly as I could. After examining my sack, he permitted me to pass on. I arrived in full time, and at the appointed hour the stage drew up, and I took my seat as a passenger. It was a beautiful morning in the early part of Spring. After traveling some distance, at one of the stage stands in order to have a better view of the country, I took my seat with the driver.

The first part of our journey lay through a country thickly populated, with frequent villages, and of course in a high state of cultivation. In the afternoon, the population of the country was less dense, and the land was less level, and in some places quite hilly. The scenery in most respects was new to me, and I enjoyed it very much.

We arrived at Easton late in the afternoon. I was much interested in its appearance, being situated emphatically in the midst of rivers. It is washed on three sides by the waters of the Bushkill, Delaware and the Lehigh. The butting cliffs of limestone rock glistening with the rays of the evening sun, interspersed with the dark green foliage of the hemlock, presented a beautiful contrast. Northward, twelve miles away, a range of mountains upon which seemed to rest a vapor of blue, bounded the view. Westward and South-

ward, in the State of New Jersey, appeared the Greenwich valley, a region fertile and well cultivated, and watered by the Musconetcong river, beyond which rose a mountain of the same name. Thus wherever you turned your eyes, mountain, hill and dale, rock, river, wood and plain, and the exquisite blending of sunlight and shadow combined to make one of the most attractive landscapes I had ever seen. During the years I remained in College, I often gazed upon it with ever increasing delight.

Lafayette College was then in its infancy. Without any buildings of its own, it held its sessions in property rented on the southern bank of the coal-colored waters of the Lehigh. Having obtained directions from the hotel, I was soon at the place, where I found a considerable building called the Mansion House, and a temporary structure, containing several rooms for the accommodation of students. Meeting with some of them, I told them I had heard of the fame of their Institution, and had come with the hope of being benefitted by its instructions. I was soon introduced to Mr. Thomas Pollock, who managed the farm, and might have been called Professor of Agriculture. I was also introduced to Mr. Daniel Gaston, who had charge of the workshops, and might have been called Professor of the Mechanical Department. Dr. P. J. Timlow had charge of the garden, and was properly dubbed Professor of

Horticulture. Mr. Charles F. Worrel was Professor of Music, and J. B. Ramsey was bookkeeper of the establishment.

I learned that Dr. Junkin, the President, lived in the city, and I could not see him at that time. I was, however, introduced to Mrs. Moore, who had charge of the boarding department, and soon became an inmate of the College. When I went over to see Dr. Junkin, I told him I was the person who had written to him from Delaware. I told him my views and hopes very freely. He received me, I thought, very coldly, but I learned afterwards that this was more in his manner, than indicative of the state of his heart. He was really a man of warm and generous feelings, but uniformly appeared to strangers reserved and distant. I told him I had about two hundred dollars, which I wished to make the best use of I could in the way of obtaining an education. I further told him, I had not fully determined in my own mind upon my future course; that I had a desire for the ministry, but was doubtful whether my constitution would endure the confinement of hard study, so as to get through. I told him I would try it for a time, and my idea was, if I could not secure the preparation necessary for the ministry, I might qualify myself for teaching. He told me he would take my two hundred dollars, and allow me six per cent. interest until it was exhausted. I accepted the offer. I was at once

assigned to the department of Dr. Timlow, and went to work in the garden, as it was now vacation. I would here state, that all the persons mentioned as having charge of the different departments, except Mr. Pollock, the farmer, were students. Professor J. J. Coon, who was in the department of Language, was there. I bought a Latin grammar, and commenced its study under his direction, reciting daily. I worked at the same time eight or ten hours per day.

There were in Easton, churches of the leading denominations in that part of the country. Most of the citizens were of German descent, hence the Lutheran and German Reformed congregations were large. The Presbyterian was next in size. The Methodist and Episcopalian were smaller. The Rev. John Grey was pastor of the Presbyterian church. He was an Irishman, as were also many of his leading members. About a mile up the Lehigh was a thriving manufacturing village, called South Easton. There some of the Presbyterians had built a small chapel, and had gathered a Sabbath-school. Mr. Gaston was Superintendent, at whose invitation I became a teacher, and continued in it, in different positions, during all the years of my College life.

At the appointed time, the summer session of 1833 opened with about one hundred students. There were three Professors, Dr. Junkin, President, and Professor of Mental and Moral Science,

Rhetoric, Political Economy, etc., J. J. Coon, Professor of Greek and Latin, and C. McCoy, Professor of Mathematics. We were to work three hours each day, the time being fixed so that all worked at the same time. As there was often work that needed to be done beyond what could be accomplished during the hours assigned, it was permitted to students, who could do so without falling behind in their classes, to work out of time. I applied myself both to work and study, and was able to obtain time for extra work.

Thus passed the first session, during which I read Historia Sacra, Cornelius Nepos, Historia Græca, and began Cæsar. My grade was one hundred both in work and study — a standing which I was not able to keep up fully. My work was rated at six cents per hour, which nearly paid my board. Boarding at the cheap table was one dollar and fifty cents per week.

Preparations were now being made for the erection of a new College building on the north side of Easton. Much work was furnished in digging out the basement story and preparing the flooring for the building. In both these I spent a good many hours. After a year or two, we moved over into the new building. Our Faculty, as well as students, underwent from time to time considerable change. Prof. McCoy was succeeded by Prof. Galloway, who in turn gave place to Prof. McCarty. Prof. Coon was succeeded by Prof. Cunningham. Prof. A.

Ryors had, for a time, charge of the preparatory department, and Rev. D. X. Junkin, brother of the President, was for a time Professor of Rhetoric.

I continued thus till my means were exhausted. Subsequently, I sold my interest in the farm to my brother-in-law for two hundred dollars, which enabled me to pursue my studies a year or two longer. When this was exhausted, I engaged in teaching a school, some ten miles from Easton, where I remained six months. The neighborhood was called the Irish settlement, and most of the people were Presbyterians. The church was supplied at the time by the Rev. Lesly Irwin, who had come but recently from Ireland. He was a thorough theologian, a fair preacher, an excellent pastor, and a very pleasant gentleman. With him I spent many pleasant, social hours. At the close of my school I returned to College, taking my place in the class I left. With my means recruited, I continued my studies for another year.

About this time, one of my fellow students, at the suggestion of the President, proposed to me to make application to the Board of Education for assistance, that I might complete my College course without further interruption. I regarded this as demanding from me a more thorough consideration of my call to the Gospel ministry. I was led to review the providences of God toward me since I entered upon a course of study. My health had continued very good, even better than

before. I had also been able to secure a fair standing as a student. These were circumstances which encouraged me to proceed. My desire for the work was unabated. The intimation of the President I considered as an indorsement on his part of my suitableness to become a candidate under the care of the Church. The application was made and accepted, and I received seventy-five dollars per year as aid to help me on my way. I received moreover, some assistance, in clothing and money, from the ladies of the Presbyterian church of Lewestown and Cool Spring.

Thus I went on, until I was graduated in the summer of 1838. The class in which I was graduated, consisted of only two persons, Mr. B. F. Stern and myself. The honors of the class were therefore divided between us; to him was adjudged the salutatory, and to me the valedictory. There was another member of the class, until a few months before the end of the term, who, on account of improper conduct, was denied the privilege of graduation. This enabled the President to say, in his address to the class, that he had never been under the necessity of uttering a reprimand to the present graduates, during their entire College course. The day of our graduation was an exceedingly rainy one, so that, beyond the students and Faculty and a few of the Board of Trustees, our audience at the German Reformed church, where our exercises were held, was very small.

My oration for the occasion had for its subject, "The Christian Enterprise."

In my final settlement of expenses at College, I found myself a little in arrears, and in order to meet my indebtedness, I borrowed for a few days the amount from a citizen of my acquaintance, until I could meet with some of my friends of the Irish settlement, who, I was sure, would willingly make the loan, until I could replace it. In this I was not disappointed, and in the course of a few weeks I was able to pay my obliging friends.

I then returned to my native State, where I had not been since the death of my sister. I would here state, that this sad event occurred but a few months before I was through College. I was summoned by a message saying that, if I wished to see her alive, no time was to be lost. I arrived only a day before her departure. The inroads of that insidious disease, consumption, had reduced her greatly, so that her strength was almost entirely gone. She could only speak in a very feeble voice. She was aware of her condition, but was calm and resigned to her Heavenly Father's will. She was only in her twenty-seventh year, but she had lived long enough to develop the characteristics of a child of God. She was married to a man who made no pretensions to piety, and, to her great discomfort, was somewhat irregular in his habits. She bore it all with resignation, ever exhibiting a meek and quiet spirit.

PART IV.

At The Seminary. Licensed. Goes West.

AFTER visiting my friends as above stated, I entered the Theological Seminary, at Princeton. I inherited the part of the farm which was my sister's, as she died without children, which I sold for one hundred and sixty dollars. I thus recruited my finances for the further prosecution of my studies.

At the Seminary, I found Dr. A. Alexander, Professor of Theology; Dr. Samuel Miller, Professor of Ecclesiastical History; Prof. Charles Hodge, in the Department of Greek and Oriental Literature; Dr. J. Addison Alexander, Professor of Hebrew. These were all men of distinguished character both for learning and piety. There were about one hundred students in attendance, all of them, of course, preparing for the ministry. I felt that it must be indeed a high privilege to be under such instructors with such associates. Our morning devotional exercises were usually conducted by the advanced class of students. In the evening,

by one of the professors. We had preaching in the chapel each Sabbath morning by one of the professors, and on Sabbath evenings, we had our conference meetings for the discussion of some practical subject; these latter meetings were attended by all the professors and by the body of the students. These exercises were often very interesting and instructive. It was a place eminently suited for growth in grace, and advancement in the divine life—many of the students seemed to regard it as an entrance into a new world.

Our sessions passed pleasantly and quickly while thus engaged, without anything to interrupt the even tenor of our way. Some of my vacations were spent in the service of the American Tract Society, in what was termed the Colporteur work, and others, in obtaining subscribers for religious periodicals. For these labors, I received a commission which greatly aided my finances. I had put myself under the care of Newton Presbytery which also gave me some assistance. Nothing of any special incident occurred during my Seminary course. I remained three sessions and completed the regular course of Theological study as then required in that school of the prophets. In the Spring of 1841, I was licensed by my Presbytery at their meeting in the church of Greenwich. I was sent to preach in the church at Stillwater, and pronounce the pulpit vacant; the pastoral relation between that church and Rev. T. Condit, having

just been dissolved by mutual consent. I returned to Princeton, and at the close of the term went to Philadelphia where the General Assembly of our Church was in session.

Just before starting, I went to take leave of the professors. Dr. Alexander inquired whether I had any field of labor selected; I told him I had not, but was thinking of going West, perhaps to Iowa. He said that Iowa, being a free State, was attracting considerable attention from ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church, and from men of our own denomination, and would likely be pretty well supplied. He said if he were a young man, and going West, he would turn his attention to the State of Missouri. After our interview, he commended me to the great Shepherd in prayer, as did also Dr. Miller. At Philadelphia, I visited the rooms of the Board of Domestic Missions, where I saw Rev. William McDowell, D. D., its Secretary, who told me that Rev. Wm. G. Bell, of Missouri Presbytery, had recently been in the office, and stated that they were in want of more laborers in that part of the Lord's vineyard.

I then went to Delaware, and after spending a few weeks with my relations, I returned to the city, obtained a commission to Missouri Presbytery, with seventy-five dollars in money, and started for my new field of labor. I was gratified to meet with Rev. A. T. Graves, one of my classmates in the Seminary, who had married in the neighborhood of

Princeton, and was, with his wife, about to start for his field of labor in the State of Tennessee. We took passage together on the cars for Harrisburg, and from thence by canal and stage to Pittsburgh, where we arrived on Saturday, the third of July. Here we spent the Sabbath, and on the morning of the fifth took passage on a steamboat for Cincinnati. The river was quite low, and we were frequently delayed by sand-bars. We did not arrive in the city till Saturday morning. Not wishing to travel on the Sabbath, and learning we could not reach Louisville until next morning, I determined to remain in Cincinnati till Monday morning. My traveling companion, having a brother at New Albany with whom he intended to stop for a few days, concluded to proceed on his journey. I had some acquaintance in the city with Rev. S. R. Wilson, who was co-pastor with his father, Rev. Joshua L. Wilson, of the First Presbyterian church.

On our passage down the river, Brother Graves had introduced me to a young man, who called himself Barker, and who passed himself off as a Christian man. When he learned that I was going to spend the Sabbath in the city, he expressed himself as being greatly averse to traveling on that day, and would therefore stop with me. He said we would find good accommodations at the Pearl Street House. We accordingly took our baggage and went to that place. It was quite a large building, and seemed to be well patronized.

We took a room together, in which there was a bed for each. We passed Saturday night comfortably without any interruption. On Sabbath morning, we went to the church of which Dr. Joshua L. Wilson was pastor, where, upon invitation, I preached. We also attended service there at night, and on our way back to the hotel, as we were passing by a meeting-house, my companion said he thought the voice of the preacher sounded familiar, and proposed that we go in. I felt a little reluctant to do so, but finally consented, and upon entering the door, saw printed on the wall the words, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." I rightly supposed it was a Universalist congregation, and my companion remarked that it was not the man he had supposed, and we left the house.

Next morning I was awakened about daylight, by my companion rushing out of the door. I sprang from my bed, and taking my pantaloons, found my pocket-book was missing. My roommate returned, saying, that before fully awake, he had heard some one working at the door, and finding he had got in the room, he ran after him along the entry, but had not been able to overtake him. We immediately dressed, and went down to the office, and inquired of the clerk if any one had gone out. He said he thought not, and while we were walking about the hall we found our pocket-books, for my companion professed to have lost

his also, but both were empty. The stairs were of a spiral form, and as our room was on the third story, I supposed the pocket-books had been thrown over the banisters, and thus lodged on the lowest floor. After breakfast we went to the house of Dr. J. L. Wilson, told him our misfortune, and by his advice went to lay the case before the Chief of the Police. That officer went with us to our room, examined the door and surroundings, but could find nothing to throw any light on the affair. The office clerk loaned us enough to pay our passage to Louisville, and at ten o'clock we were on the mail boat for that city.

On the way, I laid down in my berth, and fell into a sound sleep. When I awoke, my companion expressed surprise that a man who had been robbed so lately, could sleep so soundly. I told him there was no necessity for a man to watch who had nothing to lose. We reached Louisville next morning, and I went around to the house of a gentleman who was a member of the Board of Domestic Missions, from whom I thought I might obtain some means to help me on my way. In this I failed, and went to the hotel, having in my pocket fifty cents, called for my breakfast, and paid for it all the money I had. During the day, I went over to New Albany, where Brother Graves was stopping. Telling him of my misfortune, he at once said, "Barker has got your money," and I was soon of the same opinion. I staid with Brother

Graves all night, and borrowed thirty dollars from him, for which I gave my note, payable twelve months after date. On returning to Louisville, the clerk of the hotel handed me a note left by my late companion in travel and tribulation, in which he stated he had just been summoned back to Cincinnati, and he supposed it was in reference to our loss, and if he recovered anything, he would write and let me know. This was the last I ever heard of my friend Barker. My loss was about seventy-five dollars.

I then took passage by steamboat to St. Louis, expecting to reach there before the next Sabbath. In this, however, I was disappointed, and on Saturday night, I had quite a debate in my own mind, whether to go ashore or remain on board. As there was no convenient place to stay, I concluded to remain on the boat, and try to observe the Sabbath as well as I could. By consent of the Captain, arrangements were made for preaching, and I endeavored to perform that service. I found some difficulty in making myself heard, on account of the jarring of the boat, and the noise of its machinery. I had, however, a few attentive hearers, among whom was a Roman Catholic priest, who expressed himself as rather pleased with the sermon.

PART V.

SEEKS A FIELD. AUXVASSE.

WE did not reach St. Louis until Monday morning, and while walking up one of the streets of the city, I met and recognized the Rev. W. W. Robertson, who was on his way to Central Missouri as an agent of the Board of Domestic Missions. We had met in the Spring before at Princeton, and as I was a stranger in St. Louis, he took me with him to the house of Mr. John B. Camden, an elder in the Second Presbyterian church, with whom he was sojourning. After dinner, Mr. Camden made me a present of a black stock, remarking that I would find it more convenient and more in accordance with the practice of clergymen in the West, than the white tie that I wore, and which was usually worn by ministers in the East. I thanked him for his kindness and advice and put it on.

The next day, I took the stage for St. Charles, where Mr. Thomas Copes, the son of the minister of my boyhood, was then residing. I went to his

house, and made myself known to him, and, by invitation, remained with him all night. I found in the city two Presbyterian ministers, Revs. Hiram Chamberlain and Asahel Munson. The latter having an appointment in the country that evening, he took me with him, and I preached at the house of one of his members. On our return, he pointed out to me the Mammelles, two hills, so called from their resemblance to the human breasts. I found Bro. Munson a very agreeable, and, evidently, a very godly man.

The following day, I took the stage for Callaway county, and on the way fell in again with brother Robertson, who was traveling on horseback. At his suggestion, we exchanged the manner of travel, he taking a seat in the stage and I mounted on his horse. We spent that night at Danville, Montgomery county. The next morning, as we were about eighteen miles from Capt. Wm. Grant's, it was arranged that he would keep his seat in the stage until he reached that place, and that I should follow on horseback. I reached there awhile before dinner, and was most kindly welcomed by that very hospitable family. I had heard of large-hearted, whole-souled Christian men and women in the West, who were ready to hold up the hands of the minister, and I found in Capt. Grant a noble specimen of this sort, and in his wife, one who was ready to second all his kind impulses. He was an elder in the Auxvasse church, which was at that time vacant.

Rev. Colin McKinney, of Indiana, was before the church as a candidate. He had preached for them a few Sabbaths previous, but was then on a tour up the country, and upon his return it was to be decided whether he was to be their preacher. I found there also the Rev. James Inskeep, who was without charge. I thought the country seemed to be pretty well supplied with candidates, and began to think it might be some time before I could obtain a location. Brother Robertson went on his way, and I remained over the Sabbath in order to preach for them.

The Rev. J. L. Yantis, who had been their pastor previously, was about to take charge of the church at Lexington, Mo., and was to preach his farewell sermon on that day. Being introduced to him, he asked me whether I would prefer to preach in the morning or in the afternoon. I told him, on some accounts, I would rather preach at once, to which he readily assented. After sermon, some one inquired of him what he thought of the young preacher. He replied that he thought he would do, but added, "if you employ him, you will probably be vacant again in six months, and have to bury him." I was then quite lean and troubled with a cough, which he thought indicated consumption.

On the next Sabbath they were to have a communion service, and I concluded to remain over that Sabbath also. There were present

at the beginning of the meeting Revs. McKinney, Robertson and myself, and during the services we all preached. At the close of the Sabbath afternoon service, brother Robertson gave a warm exhortation, which created some feeling, with a loud outburst from one of the sisters. The church, after some consultation, concluded that the way was not clear to employ Bro. McKinney, and so informed him, evidently much to his disappointment.

We all spent the night at Capt. Grant's, and the next morning brother McKinney prepared to take his journey homeward. The church had made up a little purse to help him on his way. A little before he started, Capt. Grant called the attention of some of the brethren to a five dollar bank note of his, in regard to which there was some doubt of its being genuine. It passed from one hand to another, all expressing a belief that it was good, and at length it reached brother McKinney; he looked at it for a moment, and then turning to the captain, said, "this is rather too much for you to give;" to which he replied with a characteristic smile, "just put it in your pocket, sir—put it in your pocket, sir." A smile went around among the brethren, while the brother innocently did as he was told.

A day or two afterwards, I went to Fulton, mounted on a horse furnished me by Capt. Grant, with instructions not to return it until I was able to make more permanent arrangement. He

also went my security for a saddle and bridle, for which I gave my note for twenty-four dollars.

While I was in Fulton, I stopped with Major Jas. Tate, an elder of the church of that place, and preached at night in the Methodist church, there being at that time no Presbyterian house of worship in the place. A day or two afterwards, I went with Bro. Robertson to Concord, in Callaway county, and in the evening preached in a school-house, in which Miss Lucy Ward, then recently from the East, now the wife of Mr. James Love, of Liberty, Mo., was the teacher. She had endeavored to impress her pupils with religious truths, and during the exhortation of brother Robertson, after the sermon, a number of the young ladies of the school were evidently much affected.

On the next day, I went to Columbia, arriving there late Saturday evening. I left my horse at the hotel, and went to the house of the Presbyterian minister, Rev. Isaac Jones, to whom I had a letter of introduction. Bro. Jones had been an eminent revivalist, and his labors in the valley of Virginia had been very successful in bringing many into the Church, and not a few, we may reasonably hope, into Christ as their Savior. He received me very cordially, and I found his wife a very amiable and excellent lady, who was a native of Virginia. I preached for him Sabbath morning and night, and early Monday morning,

after paying my bill for my horse — one dollar — started for Rocheport.

Six miles from Columbia, I stopped for dinner at the house of Mr. Peter January, an elder in the Columbia church, whom I found to be a very pious man. In the course of conversation, we discovered some distant relationship, by marriage. Mrs. January's brother had married a cousin of mine, the daughter of Mr. William Martin, of Maysville, Ky., my mother's brother. This relationship, though distant, naturally excited in us both a mutual interest. On my way, I saw a flock of wild turkeys, the first I had ever seen, which impressed me with the fact that I was in the Western country. That evening I reached the house of Judge Lientz, whose son-in-law, Mr. R. Lyman, then living with him, was an elder in the church of Rocheport, about four miles distant. This was a little church at that time, without any supply, and the elder busied himself in giving notice that there would be preaching in town on Sabbath by a Presbyterian minister. I preached Sabbath morning and evening in an unoccupied dwelling, there being, at that time, no church edifice in the place.

The next week, I went up to Fayette, in Howard county, where I found a few Presbyterians, but no church organization. There I met Mr. McNair and family, recently from Philadelphia, who was engaged in teaching. I also met Mr. D. I. Cald-

well, from Kentucky. I staid with these brethren during that week, and preached twice on the Sabbath, in the school-house occupied by Mr. McNair. From here I went to Glasgow, and staid all night at the house of a Mrs. Digges, a lady from Virginia. Learning there was a camp-meeting in progress in the neighborhood, I made no effort to preach there.

The day after I crossed the river into Saline county, and after obtaining direction, I directed my course to the house of Dr. H. S. Venable, an elder in our Church. Night came upon me before I reached his place, and losing my way, I wandered about for several hours without finding a human habitation. At length, attracted by the barking of a dog, I came to a fence, and following this soon came to a house. I called at the gate, when a black man came, and I requested him to tell the man of the house that a Presbyterian preacher, a stranger in the country, had lost his way, and desired to obtain lodging for the night. He soon returned with the reply from the master that his house was full, and he could not accommodate me. I then asked the man how far it was to the house of Dr. Venable, and what he would charge to pilot me to it? He told me it was between two and three miles, and he would go with me for fifty cents. The offer being accepted, we set out, and reached the place some time after the family had retired. We found no difficulty in arousing the doctor, and, on making

myself known, he gave me a most cordial welcome. I had a five dollar bank note in my pocket; I asked the doctor if he could change it so that I might pay the man who came with me. He had not the change, but upon his assuring the man that he would see it paid, he took his departure, and I was shown to my room for the night. The doctor I found to be a noble man both by nature and grace. I staid with him the remainder of the week, and on the Sabbath preached in Marshall.

The succeeding week, I went to Boonville, where I met with Rev. W. G. Bell, and on the Sabbath preached for him. Up to this time I had not received any compensation, and my cash was reduced to about four dollars. Monday morning, as I was leaving, one of the elders gave me five dollars, and the people of Marshall subsequently sent me nine dollars for my services the Sabbath I preached for them. The next week I went back to Boone county, to the very pleasant home of Rev. R. L. McAfee, as I was to assist him in a meeting the next Sabbath at Jefferson City. From him I learned that the congregation of the Auxvasse had invited me to supply their church for a year, with a salary of four hundred dollars. I went with Bro. McAfee to Jefferson City, and was soon impressed that he was truly one of the excellent of the earth. They took up a collection on Sabbath, which, on the following day was paid over to me, amounting to fourteen dollars. Thus my financial affairs were becoming quite easy.

The next week Presbytery met in Fulton, and gave consent to the church of Auxvasse to employ me as Stated Supply. On the following Sabbath, I commenced my labors with that church. Brother Robertson came a few weeks later to supply the churches of Fulton and Concord. In January following, he commenced a meeting at Concord, then a small organization of about fifteen members. I was invited to assist him. On the Sabbath, Bro. R. preached a funeral discourse of one of the members who had recently died, from the text, "Unto you, therefore, which believe, He is precious." After the sermon, the communion of the Lord's Supper was administered, at the close of which Bro. Robertson gave a warm exhortation. There was much feeling in the congregation, and being invited, quite a large number indicated their desire for the prayers of the church. The meeting continued several days, during which great interest was manifested, and a large number professed faith in Christ. Among these were many young persons, and many more advanced in life. After some ten days, we concluded to suspend the meeting for a few days. At the appointed time, the meeting was resumed, and continued for nearly two weeks. Rev. I. Jones was a co-worker in that last meeting. I think over fifty united with the church at that place during the entire meeting. Arrangements were made to commence a protracted meeting at the Auxvasse church the following week, brothers Jones and Robertson to assist.

The Biographical Sketch

CONTINUED

BY

REV. W. W. ROBERTSON, D. D.

PART VI.

Revivals at Concord, Auxvasse and Columbia.

THE last chapter concludes the Biographical Sketch as dictated by Dr. Coulter. It was in the heated term of the Summer of 1878, when the last lines were penned, and he said to his wife, "We will lay this work by, until the weather is cooler, and then we will resume it."

"We know not what a day may bring forth." A few weeks later he was attacked with the disease which terminated his life and labors on earth. Another hand will have to trace his labors during some of the more eventful periods of his ministerial career. This will be much regretted by the thousands who have read with interest and profit the Autobiographical Sketch as it appeared from week to week in our valued and excellent paper, and is now to be read in the preceding chapters of this volume; but the regret of no one will be greater than is that of his life-long friend and co-laborer.

The meeting of which he speaks at the close of the narrative, took place according to appointment.

It was but a continuance of the meeting at Concord. The two churches, Concord and Auxvasse, are about ten miles apart, and in that day the congregations were very much the same. When there was a sacramental or protracted meeting in one, the congregation and the minister of the other were present, and felt as much at home as if in their own church. Many of the older members, even now, look back with delight to these meetings as seasons of social pleasure and religious edification. At the commencement of the meeting at Concord, many of the people from the Auxvasse were present and shared in the blessing. As the meeting progressed and the interest increased, the number in daily attendance was multiplied. It was a meeting never to be forgotten by those present, in time or in eternity. It was easy to preach. There were neither cavilers nor critics; there were a few scoffers.

The elder, Maj. James Tate, from the Fulton church, came to the meeting after it had been in progress a few days, and at the close of the services of the morning, remarked to a friend, "Had I not heard of the revival, I would have known as soon as I entered the room, that the blessed Spirit was present in His awakening and converting influence, for the whole house seemed filled with His presence. I was filled with awe and reverence and love." During these services which lasted eighteen days, about seventy professed faith in

Christ, and publicly avouched the Lord to be their God. More than twenty of these were from the Auxvasse congregation. Thus the fire was kindled.

The meeting at the Auxvasse church continued about ten days, and some fifty or sixty more were added to the two churches. Brother Coulter was at this time only a licentiate, but he entered into the work with his whole soul, and did good service for the Master. His preaching was mostly doctrinal, which laid a good foundation for those professing faith in Jesus Christ. He loved the doctrines of grace, and presented them with great clearness and force. He had his own convictions, but never made his conscience the rule of duty for others. Hence he was a most agreeable co-laborer. That was the first extensive revival he had ever witnessed, and there was much which was new to him, and some things not in full accord with his former training.

There was a feature in this revival, and the which has characterized all the revivals in the churches in Callaway county until the present time: A large number of young persons, from nine to twelve years of age, professed conversion, and applied for membership in the Church. This was something new to our young brother. He was just from the Theological Seminary, and had great respect for the opinions of the learned and venerated professors. Indeed, their opinions, where there was not a thus saith the Lord, were received

as oracular. One of these venerable professors had given it as his opinion, that it is not safe to receive into the Church a person under fourteen years of age. Another had said a person might be admitted to church privileges when thirteen years old, but not younger. This of course had more influence on the mind of Brother Coulter than the opinion of those with whom he was laboring. One of the members of the Session sympathized with his young preacher, and was in accord with his view. One of the ministers preached a sermon on the subject of early conversion, in which this remark was made: "Parents dedicate their children to God, instruct them in the way of the Lord, and daily pray that they may be led early in life to a knowledge of God in Christ. If they died in childhood or in youth, their parents are comforted in the hope that God had prepared them by His Spirit, washed them from their sins by the blood of Christ, and received them to dwell with Himself in heaven. And if God can make them meet for heaven, He surely can convert them in childhood, and thus prepare them for His Church and service on earth." This presentation of the subject had a good effect. At the next meeting of the Session, several young persons presented themselves for admission to the Church. These all gave very clear statements of the reason of the hope that was in them. The Moderator, after a full examination in which he was joined by different members

of the Session, turned to doubting Thomas, and said, "Well, Mr. H., what do you say; are you willing to receive them? Mr. H. answered. "I say, that Jesus Christ has said, 'Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not,' and I am not going to forbid them." This he said with tears flowing down his cheeks, and with broken utterance, which proved his confidence and delight in the genuineness of the work before him.

We had no further difficulty or reluctance on this subject. Brother Coulter lived to see that Theological Professors, though learned and pious, can not fix the age when the Holy Spirit would take up His abode and dwell in the hearts of the young, and rejoiced in after years to receive many of this age into the Church of Christ. Indeed, one of the specialties of his ministry was, the instruction of the children and youth of the several churches in which he labored. In this he excelled most of his brethren in the ministry. Everywhere he went, he had a talk for the children. Many who are now in middle life, remember with gratitude and love, his winning manner and untiring efforts to gain their confidence and affection, while he instructed them in Bible and Catechetical lessons. His theory was, instruct a child thoroughly in the Westminster Catechism with the Scripture proofs, and when he grows up, he can not easily be "driven about with every wind of doctrine."

It may here be remarked that time has proved the genuineness of the conversion of those who gave themselves to Christ in early life. Many of these are now pillars in the House of God and lights in the world. And many who have passed over the Jordan, testified with their dying breath, "Jesus is precious." Another fact is that fewer lapses have been in this class of converts than among those who came into the Church in middle life and older. They grow up with proper instruction and example, with little practical or personal knowledge of the follies and fashions of the world. They make most active and exemplary Christians; they are ready for every good work. From the testimony of Dr. J. S. Copes, we may certainly judge that brother Coulter was a member of Christ's spiritual kingdom years before he made a public profession, and united with the Church Militant. "My father," says this life-long friend, "seemed to esteem him as a true disciple of Christ at a very early age, and certainly I can remember nothing concerning him that would in any degree contravene such a judgment."

The revival spoken of above, was not confined to the two churches mentioned, but spread among all the churches in the county, and extended to churches in surrounding counties, and continued without much abatement for more than two years. Brother Coulter, with a few others, was ever ready to obey the call, "Come over and help us." Hun-

dreds were gathered into the churches as the result of these meetings. One of the most remarkable and interesting of these meetings was held in Columbia, Boone county. It commenced about the middle of January, 1843, and continued for twenty-eight consecutive days and nights.

Revs. Coulter and Robertson were called to assist the pastor, Rev. Isaac Jones. At the very beginning of the meeting, the presence of the Holy Spirit was manifested. Bro. Jones had been present and labored faithfully in several of the meetings previously held in Callaway county, and a number of the members of his church had also attended. They had felt the reviving influence of the blessed Spirit, and longed and prayed for a like blessing upon their own church and people. The word was plainly and faithfully preached, and God owned and blessed His truth to the awakening and conversion of sinners. About eighty were added to the Presbyterian church. Among these were the aged and the young, and the middle aged. Men in almost every profession, and social position of life—lawyers, physicians, merchants, farmers, and mechanics. Several entire families—parents and children together—publicly confessed Christ before men. Quite a number joined other churches in the town and country around.

During these twenty-eight days and nights there was almost constant change of weather. At one time the thermometer was below zero—then snow

and rain and a general thaw, so that the roads and streets became impassable, except to footmen. Women would go to the church at the ten o'clock morning prayer-meeting, and remain till the close of the services at night. They would take their dinner with them, or have it sent to them. The entire community seemed impressed more or less with divine and eternal things. It was indeed a time of great joy on earth and in heaven. In all these days, our brother Coulter did his full share of labor, preaching and praying, exhorting and directing the anxious inquirer to the Savior. His memory is precious to many whose privilege it was to be in attendance at that meeting, and doubtless he has met many in the kingdom above who hail him as one who helped them to turn their faces heavenward. This meeting gave strength and influence to the church, which it has held to the present day. Precious seasons that people have seen since, but none like unto that one. This was a most propitious and glorious entrance into the ministerial work, and our brother, doubtless, received a new baptism of the Holy Ghost, which was felt to the end of his earthly pilgrimage.

PART VII.

ROCHEPORT AND FAYETTE.

BROTHER COULTER was Stated Supply of the Auxvasse church for nearly two years, during which time the membership was about doubled. As before remarked, he was only a licentiate, and of course, could not administer the Sacraments. Both he and the church felt the importance, if not necessity, of his being ordained to the full work of the ministry. The church, on two occasions, sent to the Presbytery an earnest request for his ordination as an evangelist. But here arose a difficulty. He was a Presbyterian of the strictest sort, and believed that installation should be an accompaniment of ordination. He had been instructed that, to complete the evidence of a call to the ministry, there must be a call from some church to become its Pastor, according to the teachings of the Government of our Church. The Presbytery was willing to meet the wishes of the church, but he was unwilling to receive ordination without a call

to the pastorship. He was a man of his own convictions, and always acted from a sense of duty. And while he did not make his sense of duty a rule of action for others, he governed his own actions by it, whatever the consequences might be.

The church, where he had labored so successfully and so pleasantly for nearly two years, had, for reasons which to them were controlling, declined to be entangled again with the pastoral relation. These reasons need not here be stated. The church was anxious to continue him as Stated Supply, and probably thought their young preacher would yield his convictions, be ordained, and remain with the church as desired. Meanwhile, other churches were interested in securing the ministerial service of our brother. At a meeting of the Misouri Presbytery, June 2nd, 1843, we have the following minute:

"A call from the churches of Rocheport and Fayette was presented for the ministerial services of David Coulter, a Licentiate under the care of this Presbytery, which being found in order, was placed in his hands, and was accepted by him, and the 5th day of July was fixed upon for his ordination and installation at Rocheport, and the 7th day of July for his installation at Fayette, and the Presbytery when it adjourn, adjourned to meet at Rocheport on the 5th day of July, at 11 o'clock, A. M. Brother Goodrich was appointed to preach the ordination and installation sermon, brother Jones to charge

the people, and brother Robertson, the Pastor, at Rocheport. Messrs. Goodrich, McAfee and Bell, Ministers; Laurie and Vanhorn, Ruling Elders, were appointed a committee to install brother Coulter over the church at Fayette on the 7th of July, at 11 o'clock, A. M. Bro. Bell to preach the installation sermon, preside and propose the Constitutional questions; Bro. Goodrich to give the charge to the Pastor, and brother McAfee to give the charge to the people."

These services were performed at the appointed times, and our young brother entered upon a new field of labor.

Bro. Coulter never suffered the things of this world to trouble him greatly, if at all. The question, "What shall I eat, and what shall I drink, and wherewithal shall I be clothed," was never on his lips. He lived from day to day with the fullest confidence in the promise, "The Lord will provide." The salary promised, while at the Auxvasse, was four hundred dollars per year, and about the same in his new field. He was liberal in giving as the Lord prospered him, and yet he said to a friend, some ten years after he commenced his ministerial work, that he had been able to save of his salary one hundred dollars each year.

Our brother was informed some time before the meeting of the Presbytery in June, that a call would be presented from the churches of Rocheport and Fayette, and made up his mind to

accept the same, if the way were clear. And now, in view of the probable union to be formed between himself and the said churches, he felt it to be his duty to seek and form another union. He had read in the Scriptures, "It is not good for man to be alone," and he had been instructed in the school of the prophets, that a minister should have a "helpmeet," a wife, as soon as he was settled as a pastor of a church. How long this subject had been before his mind prior to the anticipated call, is not known to the writer, nor is it of much importance to the reader.

A young lady from a distance had been for several months visiting a sister living in Fulton. Brother Coulter was assisting the writer in a meeting of much interest at Concord. On Monday morning of the meeting, he remarked, that "he had been looking out for some time past for a suitable companion to aid and encourage him in his life's work; he thought Miss P—— might be the one Providence designed for him, and if he could leave the meeting without detriment, he would go to town that evening and have a conversation with her upon the subject, as she would leave for her home the next morning." This was the first intimation his friend had of any matrimonial intentions on his part, and, not knowing that Cupid had been slyly at work sowing the seeds of dissatisfaction with the state of single blessedness, answered, "there is considerable interest in our

meeting, and it may be our duty to continue the services for several days; the work is burdensome for one; you are the only ministerial help; it seems plain that your duty is to remain to the end," and suggested, "you can write and reveal your wishes in that way at some future time." The answer was, "duties never conflict. If it is my duty to remain, it is not my duty to go." He did not go to Fulton that evening; and the young lady started for her Kentucky home next morning, not knowing that she was wanted in Missouri as a minister's wife.

"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding." "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." Brother Coulter accepted this teaching in its fullest and broadest sense, and by it controlled his life in little as well as great events. Few men, under the circumstances, would have followed in the path of duty, even though the finger of Providence pointed clearly thereto, and let the bird escape from the net about to be spread. The hopes and fears and joys alternately prevailing in the few months following, the reader will never know. Suffice it to say, that on the 25th of April, 1843, Rev. David Coulter was married to Miss Mary Parker, daughter of Mr. Gabriel Parker, then living near Lexington, Ky. Mr. Parker was at that time, and for many years pre-

vious, an elder in the First Presbyterian church of Lexington, served so long and faithfully by the Rev. Nathan H. Hall, D. D. Mr. Parker has for many years lived in Boone county, Mo., and is an honored elder in the Presbyterian church in Columbia. He is at this writing in the enjoyment of good health for one who has been living on borrowed time for the last fifteen years, being now in the eighty-sixth year of his age. He is patiently waiting the summons of the Master — "Child, come home, and enter into thy rest."

It is written, "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing and obtaineth favor of the Lord." And again, "A prudent wife is from the Lord." This Scripture, like all other teachings of the Bible, was accepted with unwavering faith by our brother, and he found nothing in all the varied vicissitudes, and in the long period of more than thirty-five years of wedded life, to weaken his faith that the wife he found was from the Lord. She was ever the same loving, sympathizing, cheerful, prudent wife — a wise, and, therefore, a safe counselor — a sharer of his joys and sorrows. She encouraged him in every good work, and was never more happy than in witnessing the ingatherings into the churches in which he labored, and the prosperity of Zion through his instrumentality. Much more might be said to her praise. Suffice it to say, few men and women have been more suitably and happily mated than they.

Brother Coulter entered upon his work in the new fields of labor, over which he had just been installed, with all the earnestness and zeal of his convictions of duty, and love for the Master's glory, and for souls perishing out of Christ. He labored something over five years in this field with the usual success — with the usual encouragements and discouragements of a faithful minister of Christ.

While at Rocheport, he succeeded in an enterprise he had much at heart. A sufficiently commodious and elegant brick church was erected and dedicated to the service of God, free from debt, an ornament to the town and a testimony to the zeal and perseverance of the little band of Presbyterians. This house was burned during the war — a loss the good people there have not been able to repair, and they are now without both a shepherd and a house of worship.

In that early day, our churches were weak numerically and financially, and often a little change in the membership would very seriously affect the minister's salary. Sometimes the removal or death or failure in business of one man, would unsettle the pastoral relation. This was especially the case when the salary ranged from three hundred to five hundred dollars per annum. This state of facts conduced very much to the introduction of the Stated Supply system in our Church in the West. The field of labor in which we now find our

brother, was not an exception to the general rule of an unsettled membership. Hence, at a meeting of the Missouri Presbytery, held April 7–10, 1848, we find the following record was made:

"A request was presented by Bro. Coulter for the dissolution of the pastoral relation between him and the churches of Fayette and Rocheport. Whereupon the Stated Clerk was directed to cite these churches to appear by their commissioners before Presbytery at its next meeting, on the third Thursday of August, in Jefferson City, and there show cause, if any, why the request should not be granted."

At the meeting of the Presbytery in Jefferson City, commencing the third Thursday in August, 1848, the following minute was made:

"The request of Brother Coulter for the dissolution of the pastoral relation with the churches of Rocheport and Fayette was renewed: and the churches, through their representatives, acquiescing in the request, on motion, the request was granted, and the pulpits of those churches declared vacant."

The reasons given for this request are not now remembered. He was actuated, no doubt, by a conviction of duty. It may be that a wider field of usefulness seemed to open unto him — or, perhaps, because of deaths and removals, he felt that the churches were not able to meet their financial engagement with him. In the call, the Rocheport

church promised $300, and the Fayette church $200, that he might "be free from worldly cares and avocations." It is remembered, and also on record, that at a meeting of the Presbytery in April, 1846—

"Brother Coulter made a statement respecting the pecuniary difficulties in the churches of his charge — that the church of Rocheport is considerably in arrears for the salary of the last two years, respecting which he wishes Presbytery to allow him to make such arrangement as he may agree with said church. And also, that Presbytery so modify the call of said church to him, as to make the sum promised $225 instead of $300, as it now stands. As to the church of Fayette, he states, that, from removals and deaths, the church is wholly unable to meet their engagement to him, and he asks the advice of Presbytery in the premises. After hearing these statements, Presbytery—

"*Resolved*, That Brother Coulter be allowed to make such arrangements with the church at Rocheport as he may think will be for the spiritual interest of said church. Also,

"*Resolved*, That the sum promised in the call of said church to the Rev. David Coulter be $225 instead of $300, as heretofore promised. In reference to the church of Fayette, Presbytery is of the opinion, from their own knowledge, as well as from the statements made by the pastor of said church, that the interest of the church will be

promoted by making said church, together with the county of Howard, missionary ground; therefore,

"*Resolved*, With the consent of the church of Fayette, without interfering with the relation now existing between the pastor and said church, that Presbytery recommend to the Board of Missions that Brother Coulter be appointed to labor as an Evangelist in the county of Howard one-half of his time, and that his compensation for said labor be $200 per year, with the understanding that whatever support may be given in said field, be deducted from said amount.

"*Resolved*, That the Stated Clerk furnish as much of the above minute as relates to the church of Fayette to the Board of Missions, that the intention therein contained may be carried out."

This was done; and the new arrangement continued for two years, and then came the request for the dissolution of the pastoral relation, as stated above. The arrangement made with the Rocheport church in reference to the arrearage of salary, as mentioned in his statement to Presbytery, was on this wise: Bro. Coulter made the offer if they would pay the half of the amount, which was something over $200, he would give them a receipt in full. This was accepted. He was afterwards asked if the arrangement was satisfactory; he replied he supposed it was — that he himself was satisfied, and he had heard no complaint on the part of the church.

PART VIII.

NEW BLOOMFIELD AND MILLERSBURG.

THE interval was always short between Brother Coulter's leaving one field of labor and his entering another. Sometimes, indeed, not a single Sabbath intervened. As soon as he is released from his charge at Rocheport and Fayette, he is called to the churches of New Bloomfield and Millersburg (now White Cloud), in Callaway county. Here he had often assisted in sacramental and protracted meetings, and was almost as well acquainted with these people, and they with him, as if he had spent his ministerial life among them.

In the life of such a man as Dr. Coulter, there are many events which become pleasing reminiscences in his own family, and among his more intimate friends and acquaintances, but are of little interest to the general reader. The world knows nothing of the inner life of the man. They may meet him in social circles, and be drawn unto him in bonds of friendship by his genial manner. They may listen with more or less

interest to his Sabbath services, and be little or not at all moved by the exhibition of divine truth as it falls from his lips. They may go away with words of approval or disapproval, with their criticisms of matter or manner, but they follow not the man of God to his private retreat, where he weeps over the apparent barrenness of his own labor, and mourns over the unfruitfulness and inconsistencies of many of the members of the Church, and the impenitency and hardness of heart of the ungodly. They hear him not, as he exclaims in bitterness of spirit, in the language of the Prophet, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" His heart would often faint within him, were it not for the promise, "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it."

Rev. David Coulter was a man of strong faith, and was less given to discouragement than most men. There were several interesting revivals of

religion during his stay with these churches, and much precious seed sown, which has sprung up, and is now bearing fruit unto holiness. A lady remarked a few days ago, that her first recollection of Mr. Coulter was when a little girl, sitting in his lap reciting the Catechism to him: and she reads with the greatest interest his biographical sketch. This is only one of scores of men and women who remember his work of love with devout gratitude. With them his memory is precious. He was an earnest friend and helper in all church enterprises, having for their object the advancement of Christ's kingdom.

In 1851, the Synod of Missouri, realizing the importance of establishing a first-class college, to be under its control, resolved, "that the time is come to arise and build," and appointed a committee composed of elders from different parts of the State to examine such places as should offer inducements for its location, and report at the next meeting of Synod. In 1852 the committee reported, and four places were put in nomination, Richmond, Boonville, Fulton and St. Charles. Fulton received a large majority of the votes cast. The Rev. Hiram P. Goodrich, D. D., suggested the name Westminster, which was adopted by the Synod. Trustees were appointed by the Synod, and were directed to obtain a Charter at the next meeting of the Legislature. This was done. Rev. David Coulter was a member of the first Board of

Trustees appointed, and was continued in this office, with a short interval, until his death. He gave liberally of his time and means to its support, and one of the last acts of his life was in the interest of Westminster College. He sent, as his own subscription, and that of a few others which he solicited, a check for one hundred and twelve and a half dollars, to aid in paying the current indebtedness of the College, a receipt for which sum he received a few days before his last sickness. He requested his wife, after taking from his library such books as she might wish to retain, to send the remainder to Westminster College. This she has done, and the College is in receipt of about two hundred volumes, many of them valuable and rare, and these will remain in the College Library as a memorial of the devotion of one of the earliest and most valued friends of the institution. The Board of Trustees, at their annual meeting in June, 1874, conferred upon him the Honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. Of this proceeding, he pleasantly remarked, "If the Board of Trustees wished to increase my usefulness, their help came a little too late."

He remained with the churches of New Bloomfield and White Cloud nearly eight years. These were years of pleasant interchange with neighboring ministers. Some of these still live, and often, in memory, bring before the mind these precious seasons of the past. The elders of these two churches, who were to him as Aaron and Hur were to

Moses—Martin Baker, John McClanahan, Joseph Culbertson, and John Robison, of White Cloud, and Thomas Caldwell, William H. McKamey, Dr. A. Allen, Col. George King and Dr. Rufus Abbott, of New Bloomfield, all good and true men, passed with one exception over the river before their faithful shepherd had finished his work of winning souls to Christ. The good people of New Bloomfield had, after their organization, built them a house of worship of rather small dimensions, yet large enough for the accommodation of the congregations of that early day. The mistake, however, was made, which has been too common, the church was built a considerable distance from the little village, and access to it was difficult. Yet the Lord accepted the offering His people so cheerfully made. He met with them and blessed them and their children in their more spiritual offerings. The older members joyfully remember the "precious seasons" they have had in the old brick church.

When brother Coulter commenced his pastoral work with this church, the congregation had outgrown the ability of the house to accommodate them. Hence the necessity of building a new and much larger house. This, in a few years was done, and he had the pleasure of dedicating it to the service of God. Its doors are still open on Sabbath and other days to invite all who will to hear the word of eternal life.

PART IX.

Hopewell, Columbia and Liberty. Blindness.

IN April, 1859, Dr. Coulter was called to the Hopewell church, in Lafayette county. The salary promised was six hundred dollars a year. This was a considerable increase on former salaries. A few months after he took charge of Hopewell church, he received an invitation to visit the church at Jacksonville, Illinois, with the view of becoming their Pastor. The salary offered was one thousand dollars, with the promise of increasing the amount, if they were mutually pleased. His answer was such as those who knew him would have expected. He said, "If the Lord has called me to Hopewell, I do not think He would call me away so soon." The question of duty settled, he gave the matter no further thought.

After preaching one year at Hopewell church, he was invited to give half his time to the Prairie church in the same county, which invitation he accepted, and continued to serve these two churches till the last year of the civil war. During this

time he was much harrassed and interrupted in his work. He was in politics what was called a Constitutional Union man. This, in the estimation of those who roamed over the country to plunder and devastate and kill, was worse than a downright, outspoken rebel. These men had no love for the Constitution of their country, and less for those who had; and while he was scrupulously reticent in regard to the unhappy civil strife, and while his walk and conversation were strictly confined to the duties of an ambassador of Christ, his life and property were in constant jeopardy. But amid all these trials and dangers, he possessed his soul in perfect peace. He was robbed four times of his horse. Once he was met by a band of marauders in the open prairie and ordered to dismount. He commenced pleading for his horse, but they made such demonstrations, bidding him, with oaths, to dismount, that he thought it prudent to obey orders. They took his fine and valuable horse, and left him an old, broken-down one. In a few days he started to Presbytery, which met in Clay county. The old horse gave out by the time he got there, and he had to leave him as no longer fit for service, which the robbers had discovered before. He was now a-foot again, but reached home by the help of friends. He continued, however, to visit the congregation and to fill his appointments—sometimes walking five or six miles to make a pastoral visit. It was now considered

too dangerous both to man and beast, for the people to assemble themselves together to worship, as was their custom.

Those were perilous times. Neither life nor property of any kind was safe. La Fayette county, lying near the border of the State, was subject to frequent raids. The churches were the favorite resort of these marauding parties. For here they found horses, bridles and saddles ready to their hand. The best of these they would take, without so much as saying to the owners, "with your permission, gentlemen." Many of the ministers had been driven from the country; some were in prison, or under bonds; and some had been wantonly killed while peaceably attending to their ministerial duties. Under these circumstances, and finding the door of usefulness closed, our brother directed his way to Columbia, in Boone county, where there was comparative safety. The Hopewell church building was burned by some straggling party soon after he had left the county.

The church at Columbia was then vacant, and he was invited to fill the pulpit, which he did for eighteen months. During these years of civil strife, and rapine and blood, when every one was constantly imperiled, and was anxious for his own safety, and the safety of his family and friends, our churches were not blessed to any great extent with the reviving influences of the Holy Spirit. The Columbia church was not an exception to the

general rule. "Hold the fort," might then have been sung with more propriety than now. And yet brother Coulter's labors were not in vain in the Lord, even at such a time. The church was most fortunate in obtaining the services of such a man to go in and out before them, and to break to them the bread of life. While at Columbia he prepared a series of lectures addressed especially to the young. He preached these at various points. Some of them will be found in this volume. About this time, he received an invitation to visit Ashley church, in Pike county, with a view to settle among them as Pastor. Satisfactory arrangements not being made, he declined any further negotiations.

His next and last move, till he was called to his reward, was to Liberty, in Clay county, whither he was invited in the latter part of the year 1866. He commenced his pastoral work with the church of Liberty in connection with Bethel church in the same county, January 1867. He continued to labor with these churches, giving to each half his time, until 1870. During this year he divided his time at Bethel with the church at Kearney, about five miles west of Bethel, preaching to each one Sabbath in the month, and two Sabbaths at Liberty. In 1871 he gave up the Bethel church, and instead, preached one Sabbath in the month at Stewartsville, in De Kalb county. This was a task voluntarily assumed, but it proved too heavy for one of his age and constitution.

About this time, a severe affliction befell him, and continued with greater or less severity during his life. In reference to this, Mrs. Coulter can best speak. In a letter just received, she says :

"It was during the year 1871, while engaged in visiting the Stewartsville congregation, which was very much scattered, in the open prairie where severe winds were blowing almost continually, that he was first attacked with inflammation of his eyes, which from the beginning very seriously impaired his sight. I remember well his coming home and dropping his saddle pockets on the floor, saying, 'I am almost blind; it was with difficulty I could get home.' We were both very much alarmed at his condition, fearing the worst results. He was confined many weeks, and suffered great pain. He had been somewhat relieved, when he was called upon to preach the funeral sermon of one of the old members of his church in Liberty. I find this memorandum made at the time—'On the 20th day of July, 1872, Mr. Coulter preached the funeral of Mrs. Moore, one of the oldest members of the church. He was just recovering from the first attack of inflammation of his eyes. He had to get Dr. Marsh's permission to attend the funeral. The Doctor doubted the propriety of his going out at all, but finally gave his consent. Mr. Coulter felt that he could not refuse, though he was not able to discharge the duty. When we got to the church, he was too blind to go into the pulpit

without assistance, and for the first time preached without opening the Bible. We were all impressed that day with the sad thought of his going blind, and many were affected to tears. He repeated the Scriptures and hymns from memory. He was never able to read in the pulpit after that, though he could read a little at home with good light; and by forming a tube with his hands he could read some newspapers, yet with difficulty. We procured the New Testament with the Psalms in the large primer print. He was able to read in that, but always required good light. Every fresh attack cast a darker shadow over his pathway. We made five trips to St. Louis, and his eyes were operated upon four times; the last time he received no benefit, but was rather worse for the operation. Dr. Green, of St. Louis, was his physician, and he gave him no encouragement to hope for any permanent benefit by this last operation. Since January, 1875, when he had the third attack, he had seen very little. It was, as he expressed it, dim twilight with him in the brightest day. Mr. Coulter became impressed before we made the first trip to St. Louis, that he would lose his sight entirely. He was suffering very much at the time. He seemed greatly distressed for a few days, and said he felt he would become a perfect cipher in the world. Nothing I could say seemed to comfort him, but soon he became cheerful and perfectly reconciled. 'It is the Lord: let Him do what

seemeth Him good. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight. Not my will, but Thine be done.'

"I never heard another murmur from his lips throughout all the dark days he spent here on earth. Such patience and submission are seldom to be witnessed in this world."

In consequence of his affliction, he was compelled to resign his charge. Another minister in the meantime was called to the church, and after a few years it became vacant again. We continue the statement of Mrs. Coulter.

"In 1876 the Liberty church was left vacant, and Mr. Coulter undertook to fill the pulpit every Sabbath during that year. He was now unable to read the largest print. His usual custom was to think of a text, and have me get the Concordance and find it. I would read over the chapter a few times, and then prompt him in repeating it. Very soon the chapter would be committed to memory. He usually called for his hymns Saturday evening, and in a very few minutes would have the three hymns with their numbers and metres fastened in his mind. He loved to preach even in his greatest infirmity. He taught a Bible class through all his affliction, whenever he was able to be out at all, and was just as punctual in his attendance at the prayer-meeting.

"In all the churches in which he was called to labor, there was a healthy growth. He rarely ever

had a communion without additions, and it was very seldom any one applied for admission to the church, with whom he had not previously had personal conversation on the subject, and these conversations were usually had during his pastoral visits. He remarked one day, he thought his pastoral visits were more blessed under God, than any of his labors. This remark was drawn out by the fact, that, when on a certain occasion, twelve or fifteen persons came forward to unite with the church, one of the elders expressed surprise, and said that he did not know that any one thought of making a public profession. Mr. Coulter told him that he expected them, as he had learned, from previous conversation with them all, their feelings and wishes on the subject. He usually made an effort to visit all the members of his church before each communion, and as they were often very much scattered, it made this part of his work very laborious. It was always a grief to him, when any of the parents of the Church neglected to have their children baptized, and he tried to instruct them in this important duty in various ways; usually, by placing some instructive work on the subject in their hands. He continued to preach almost to the last breath. A physician was called in consultation; he was not a Christian; as soon as he came in, Mr. Coulter said, 'Doctor, I am dying in the faith I have so long preached to you.' Among his last words, a short time before he ceased to

breathe, were, 'I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day—I am wrapped up in the righteousness of Christ.'"

Thus passed away from earth this eminent servant of God, on the morning of Thursday, the 22nd of August, 1878. He being dead, yet speaketh.

PART X.

THE END OF HIS LABORS.

BY REV. J. G. FACKLER.

IN October, 1866, Dr. Coulter visited Liberty, church, at the request of the Session. This visitation resulted in his deciding to settle in that place and take charge of the congregation. About the close of the year, he entered regularly upon his work in that field, and there he continued to reside until he was called to the rest of heaven. The people received him warmly, and in a short time there was a feeling of mutual endearment between him and the church. His labors at first were divided among the congregations of Liberty, Bethel and Kearney, all in Clay county. It was no small undertaking, for a man at his time of life, to supply three churches, all of which had suffered more or less from the demoralizing effects of the recent civil war. But he was not one easily discouraged. The question of duty decided, he had a persistence that led him to go forward, looking to God for results. In a comparatively brief period, as the records of the Session show,

the church at Liberty began to feel the power of his presence as a faithful preacher of the Gospel, and his influence in the matters of a better organization.

At the time, there were but few male members in the congregation, and only two elders, one of whom had been recently elected, while the other lived some miles in the country and was well advanced in years. But there was a small band of earnest, noble-hearted Christian women, who loved their church and were indefatigable in their purpose and efforts to build it up. These whole-souled women gathered around Dr. Coulter and his wife, who was, herself, an untiring worker, and soon new life appeared in every department of the field of endeavor. The prayer-meetings, which had been suspended, were resumed, the Sabbath-school, for the size of it, shortly became one of the most efficient in all the community, and the congregation was aroused to unusual activity. As opportunity offered, Dr. Coulter visited from house to house, the people, as they formed his acquaintance, becoming more and more impressed with the great sincerity of his character, and the singleness of his desire to glorify Christ in the salvation of men. Owing to the limited amount of material in a town like Liberty, from which any of the four or five congregations could draw, for the purpose of building up, a gradual, steady growth was all that could be

reasonably expected. This expectation was realized. From time to time a number of hopeful additions were made, many of these coming from the Sabbath-school, who, under the sound and wholesome instructions of their pastor, and by reason of his tender watch-care over them, soon ranked among the best workers in the church.

We have not been able to obtain full information in regard to the labors of this devoted servant of God in the congregations of Bethel and Kearney. In general, it may be said, that while he held these fields, he was always regular in filling his appointments to meet the people; sparing no pains to build them up "in every good word and work." For nearly six years, most of his labors were given to the Liberty church, although during that period he frequently visited a number of feeble congregations, doing all in his power to aid and encourage them. Never very strong and robust, he nevertheless performed an astonishing amount of work, urged thereto by a consuming desire to do good. He was, indeed, "abundant in labors." Nothing but a providential hindrance ever kept him from filling an appointment. He was accustomed to say, that "an appointment to preach the Gospel ought always to be made for the glory of God, and should be kept for the same reason." His habit of punctuality in this regard was almost proverbial among those who knew him well.

After he had supplied the church in Liberty and other points, as above mentioned, for nearly six years, it pleased God to send upon him a painful affliction, which was protracted through the remainder of his days. From his earliest boyhood, he had, at longer or shorter intervals, suffered from attacks of neuralgia, that, at such times, affected for a few days his eye-sight, producing a dimness of vision. But as no permanent serious results followed these attacks, and as they became less frequent in later years, but little apprehension was felt concerning them. In the winter of 1871–72, he experienced, however, an unusually severe visitation of the kind, which so affected his eyes as to create alarm in view of a probable permanent impairment of vision. The fears of his friends were destined to be realized. After undergoing several painful operations at the hands of a distinguished oculist, it became apparent to all that no sure relief could be had. Gradually the trouble increased, the obscuration becoming more and more palpable, until, in the closing months of his life, the blindness was almost total. For much of the time he suffered comparatively little, and this was a great comfort to his friends.

When he found that it would be impossible for him to continue actively in charge of the church he loved so well, he set himself to work to obtain for the congregation the services of another minister. Meantime, notwithstanding his great affliction, he

never allowed himself to murmur and complain or remain idle. He always found something to do for the cause of Christ. He so loved to preach the Gospel, that he often appeared in the pulpit proclaiming the glad tidings with an unction and power that greatly gratified his hearers. He would thoroughly memorize the chapters of Scripture and the hymns he used in the services, and these he would repeat with the utmost distinctness and fervor in the hearing of the congregation. His memory seemed to hold everything that was read to him with wonderful tenacity. Especially was this true of all *Scripture* truth. It appeared "to be fastened like a nail in a sure place." During the last three or four years of his life, whenever the pulpit was not supplied by others, which was frequently the case, he was never known to hesitate about speaking to the people concerning the grace of God in Christ. Some of his sermons, delivered under these circumstances, are said, by those who had the privilege of hearing them, to have been equal to the best efforts of his life. The remark was made to the writer by an intelligent listener, who heard him often during the period referred to: "*His sermons were better and better as he approached the end of his journey.*"

He taught a Bible class of gentlemen regularly every Sabbath, down to the day when he "went to his bed for the last time." Guided by the hands of his faithful and devoted wife, who

entered heartily into his zeal for doing good, he would make his way to the house of God, "in summer's heat and winter's cold," that he might expound to his waiting class the lesson for the day. On the very Sabbath morning, as we have said, that he went to bed with the sickness that was unto death, he was all ready to go to his class, and would have made the effort to do so, but for the persuasions of his wife, to remain at home. Her watchful eyes saw that he was about to overtask his strength. Always submissive to the will of God, he was content to forego the effort he was about to make.

This, as before stated, was on the Sabbath morning, August 10th, 1878. His disease, pneumonia, rapidly developed. He soon appeared to entertain but little, if any, hope of ultimate recovery. His friends became exceedingly anxious in regard to his condition. His physicians were untiring in their attentions to him, and all that willing hearts and hands could plan and execute in his behalf, was done. At times, there were hopes indulged by those who loved him so much, that it might please God to restore him. The brethren of other churches were warm and earnest in their sympathies. He had, by his singularly pure and upright Christian life, endeared himself to everybody who knew him. Could human wishes have availed, he would surely have been permitted to linger a little longer on the

shores of time. But his work was finished, and the rest of heaven near at hand.

Owing to the nature of his disease and the desire of his physicians, that he should be kept as quiet as possible, he talked but little during his illness. The night before his departure, a brother minister of another denomination was seated by his bed engaged in a brief conversation with him. In reply to some question touching his hopes concerning the eternal future, Dr. Coulter remarked, in "his peculiar manner": "*I am wrapped up in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.*" In that brief expression we have a very clear setting forth, not only of the ground of his personal hopes, but we also catch a glimpse of the Pauline doctrine he loved to preach so well.

On the morning of August 22nd, after an illness of eleven days, which he bore, as he did all his afflictions, with unmurmuring patience, his blood-bought and blood-washed soul fell asleep in Jesus. A life of beautiful symmetry was rounded out in the likeness of his Lord and Master. His remains were conveyed to Columbia, in Boone county, where they will rest "until the morning breaks and the shadows flee away." His funeral sermon was preached by Rev. W. W. Robertson, his earliest ministerial associate in Missouri and life-long friend.

In closing this account of the last years of Dr. Coulter, it is well to emphasize one or two remarkable facts, so remarkable, indeed, that they did not fail to challenge the attention of those who were eye-witnesses of them. The facts are these: That, although nearly entirely blind for several years, this servant of God never ceased to feel there was something still for him to do. Such was his love for the Church of his choice, and so strong was his desire to promote the interests of that Church in every way, that, though the world around him, was for the most part dark, and he could only travel when accompanied by his wife or some friend to guide him, he was perhaps as regular in his attendance upon the meetings of Presbytery and Synod, as a majority of his brother ministers. His heart was in all that concerned Zion, and it was his delight to take part in the counsels and deliberations of the courts of the Church. Where there was a will there was a way. It was a matter of conscience with him, to be present, if possible, in these assemblies. A lesson is to be learned here, of great importance to all office-bearers in the Lord's house. Here is an example worthy of all imitation.

Again, it may be said, that this beloved brother, though blind as to the outer world, nevertheless held himself in readiness, when it was possible, to obey every summons that might be sent him by others in affliction. Led by the hand of his faithful

companion, he would go by day and by night, if need be, to the bedside of the sick and dying, to utter words of consolation and offer prayer for the tempted and tried. At such times, none could look upon him without being reminded of Paul's language to the Corinthian brethren:— "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, *by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*" It was all very wonderful; a something that belongs not to the earth — a something, rather, that is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is Christianity in its life and power, lifting man out of himself and making him one with his loving Lord.

MEMORIAL SERVICE,

AND

REMINISCENCES.

MEMORIAL SERVICE.

[The following was published in the *St. Louis Presbyterian*. September 6th, 1878.]

SERVICES were held in the Presbyterian church in Liberty, on Sunday, September 1st., commemorative of the life and character of that eminent servant of God, Rev. David Coulter, D. D., who departed this life at his home, in Liberty, on the morning of Thursday, the 22nd of August. Opportunely to the occasion, the Rev. J. G. Fackler was present, being on his return from a trip to Colorado to his home in Texas—and preached an eloquent and impressive discourse from 2 Cor. v: 1–8. In connection with the discourse the accompanying memorial was read.

A very large audience was present, and a degree of solemnity was manifested that is seldom exhibited even on occasions of this character. Mr. Fackler has been, through his entire ministerial life, the intimate friend, and, to a considerable extent, the co-laborer of Dr. Coulter, and was there-

fore qualified to speak of his great worth as a man and his eminence as a minister of the Gospel. The pulpit and church were draped in mourning, in memory of one whose familiar voice and presence the sacred place shall know no more forever.

Truly hath a good man fallen in Israel, and the sad news will awaken memories of his faithful labors in the Lord in many localities in Missouri, through long years of service. L.

IN MEMORIAM

Of REV. DAVID COULTER, D. D., read by Rev. John C. Fackler, in the Presbyterian Church, Liberty, Mo., Sept. 1, 1878.

When a good man dies, it is eminently proper that those who have known him and shared in the benefits of his life and labors, should cherish his memory, and offer the tribute of respect and love to his character and worth. We are here this morning, in the house of God, for the purpose of improving, as best we may, the providential dispensation which has recently removed from this community, one of the noblest and purest men I have ever known—a man whose death has carried sadness to very many hearts in the different communities, where his services were so highly appreciated.

About 2 o'clock in the morning of the 22nd of August, 1878, at his home in this city, Rev. David Coulter, D. D., departed this life, for the "Land Immortal." Had he lived until the 10th

of next November, he would have reached the age of three score years and ten. He was born of Scotch-Irish ancestry, in the State of Delaware, County of Sussex. His collegiate education was received at Lafayette College, Pennsylvania, and his theological training at Princeton, New Jersey, under that prince of preachers, Dr. Archibald Alexander. He united with the Presbyterian Church as early as 1825, thus identifying himself with the people of God for a period of about fifty-three years. He was licensed to preach the gospel in 1841, in which year he came to Missouri, and settled in the County of Callaway, taking charge of the Auxvasse church. There he labored with great zeal and efficiency, until the Spring of 1843, when he was called to the pastorate of the churches at Rocheport and Fayette. In this field, he remained an earnest and faithful worker between five and six years. In 1848 he accepted the charge of the churches of Bloomfield and Millersburg, in Callaway county, continuing with them, abundant in labors, until April, 1856—nearly eight years—when he was called to the Hopewell church, in Lafayette county. He remained in charge of that congregation, serving also a portion of the time at the Prairie church in the same county, until about the close of the late war. Subsequently he ministered to the church in Columbia a year and a half, after which he came to Liberty, where he went in and out before the people for nearly twelve years.

Thus we find his ministry aggregating a period of almost forty years.

In April, 1843, just before he became the pastor of the church in Rocheport, he was married to Miss Mary Parker, his true and faithful help-mate, during all the arduous and responsible labors of those eventful years. Few women have ever been left richer in the legacy of a husband's character and life. To have been the wife and daily companion of such a man, I doubt not, will be a consideration calculated to cheer and brighten her pathway, during the remainder of her pilgrimage to the world where the tear never falls and the parting never comes. To have been a helper and counselor to such a man of God, as she was for five and thirty years, leaves her crowned, as a woman, highly favored of the dear Master and Redeemer of sinners. The sweet savor of her husband's name and his noble, useful life, is something she may prize, as in value immensely above rubies.

In all the fields of labor occupied by Bro. Coulter, he won golden opinions. Those who knew him best, loved him most. I have reason to know that his name is still fragrant in every congregation he ever served; and how could it be otherwise? We have only to think of him, as moving among the people with a single eye to their good. All his actions—the whole temper and spirit of his conduct, in the pulpit and out of

it, bespoke him a man "determined to know nothing, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." Besides the work of glorifying his Lord and Master, and doing good to his fellow-men, he gave his thoughts and attention to very few objects. He was regarded everywhere as one thoroughly consecrated to his vocation as a gospel minister. I do not believe the wealth and honors of the world, laid at his feet, would have turned him aside a hair's breadth from the line of his sacred calling. Like Paul, he "magnified his office." He literally gloried in the cross of Christ. To preach Jesus acceptably was the noblest ambition of his life; and this—because he trusted alone in the Infinite righteousness of Christ for salvation for himself and his race. Many, to whom it was his privilege to make known the offers of the Gospel, will doubtless bless his name to all eternity as the instrumentality of their rescue from the power of the great destroyer. And many of the Lord's dear children have abundantly grown in grace, by reason of the rich spiritual food he brought them from the overflowing banqueting house of heaven.

While our dear brother was greatly beloved and honored by all the ministers of the Synod of Missouri, and while his death will be sincerely lamented by them, to me his departure comes like a grievous personal loss. My acquaintance with him began thirty years ago. During all that period there has never been a jar to our friendship and

fellowship. He was one of the Lord's servants who assisted at my licensure to preach the Gospel. He was present at my ordination, to take part in my examination, and to put his hands upon my head in that solemn transaction. He aided in my installation as pastor of the first charge I ever held, and encouraged me, as a true brother, at a time when I deeply felt the need of sympathy, as one just entering on the service of the holy ministry. Eighteen years afterward, in the orderings of a kind providence, he was present to assist in my installation as pastor of the church in St. Joseph, and bid me God speed in my work. In the early days of my ministry, he was nearer to my field of labor than any of my brethren, and we were consequently often thrown together, assisting each other in protracted services, and growing into each other's sympathies. Thus the threads of his life seemed to become interwoven with those of my own. When separated by time and space, a warm correspondence was kept up between us. And when I thought of returning to Liberty as my future home, one of the considerations influencing my decision in the matter, was the pleasing prospect of being near him again and sharing in his wise counsels and warm brotherly sympathies. Standing here in this sacred place, where he has stood so often, and with the eye of a holy God looking down upon me, let me say, I bear my testimony to the fact that I loved him with a warmth

of affection such as one rarely feels in a lifetime for another. He was true, yea, the very soul of sincerity, in his love for me, and I shall carry his image enshrined in my heart until we meet before the great white throne of judgment, and praise the blessed name of Jesus together in our Father's house.

As a *Presbyter*, Dr. Coulter always ranked high in the estimation of his brethren. When the courts of the Church were in session he never failed to be present, if it was possible. In everything that came before those bodies, he took an interest. It is no disparagement to others to say that he excelled in his knowledge of the Church Constitution and Book of Order. Hence, in Presbytery and Synod, his name was always found on the most important committees. His reports were invariably carefully written and promptly submitted. On all subjects of moment, he held pronounced opinions, and his judgment when given was uniformly treated with the highest respect. He displayed the same conscientiousness in the discharge of his duties in Presbytery, as marked his character in the conduct of religious services. He loved the Church, her doctrines and standards, and while no extremist in his views, he could stand in his place, where *principle* was at stake, with the firmness of a Christian hero. He will be greatly missed as a Presbyter. His wisdom and prudence—his well balanced mind—will be wanting in the delibera-

tions of the Lord's servants, and the messengers of the churches.

As a *preacher*, he was not only sound in doctrine, but also eminently practical, earnest and tender. His theology was that of Paul. He believed in the doctrines of grace, and loved and clung to them with all his heart. Christ and His righteousness was the burden of almost every sermon I ever heard him deliver. More than twenty years ago, in my own pulpit in Jefferson City, I heard him declare, with wonderful emphasis, that the sinner, in order to be saved, must be "wrapped up in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ." The very night he died, he remarked to a brother minister of another denomination: "I am wrapped in the robe of Christ's righteousness." This doctrine of human helplessness and Christ's all-sufficiency, he delighted to preach. And I know of many a doubting Christian who has found a peaceful refuge and sweet repose of soul, in the Gospel as thus presented by him. Wonderfully instructive and comforting to God's people were the discourses which he delivered, both in public and private. It has often seemed to me, a matter of impossibility for any man of intelligence to sit regularly under his ministry without being built up and established in the faith of Christ.

His manner and spirit in the pulpit were those of a man wholly absorbed in his theme. When dealing with the high thoughts of the Gospel, and

man's relations to God, I think there was less self-consciousness about him than any man I ever knew. I have seen and heard him, both in his sermons and prayers, when he appeared to me as one standing almost face to face with his Maker. The very tones of his voice have thrilled me, as he pleaded with sinners for Christ, and with Christ for sinners. I have heard a number of our ministers say, that they "would rather hear David Coulter pray, than listen to most preachers." There was always thought in his sermons. I have listened to him many times during the last thirty years, but I never heard a foolish thing fall from his lips. The teaching of the Holy Scriptures, like a golden thread, ran through all his utterances.

As a *pastor*, he was true and faithful, tender and kind. His presence was always welcome in the family. His counsels judicious and well-timed. His reproofs and admonitions were administered in the gentle and loving spirit of the Master whom he served. His intercourse with the people of his charge, was remarkably uniform in its character. It was a rare thing for him ever to become despondent, much less would he carry any feeling of despondency with him among those to whom he ministered in the things of God. His religious life ran at an even flow, like a calm and peaceful river. There could be nothing spasmodic in such a character as his: whether in the pulpit, dealing with the high themes of Redemption, or in the prayer-

meeting, leading the devotions of the people, or in the social circle, giving tone to Christian intercourse, or in the chamber of suffering and bereavement, speaking words of sympathy and encouragement—everywhere, he carried upon him the flavor of an earnest, consecrated man of God. No one could mistake either his spirit or purpose. I do not believe that the most evil disposed would have dared to charge him with the least approach to insincerity, while in the performance of his ministerial and religious duties.

Brother Coulter had a wonderfully large, catholic heart. While loving his own mother Church with a strong affection, and serving her with a truly loyal spirit at all times, he had as little that was narrow, contracted and bigoted as any man in the whole field of my knowledge. His Christian character was broad, liberal and full of charity. He loved all who loved Christ, and delighted to hail them as brethren, beloved in the Lord. And while pronounced in his denominational views and in the advocacy of them, during his entire ministry of nearly forty years, he was never known to have the slightest controversy with those who bore a different designation from himself. His house was the home of his brethren of other names, he loved to labor with them in the work of winning souls, and heartily rejoiced in their success.

Thus far I have spoken of Dr. Coulter, chiefly with reference to his character as a Presbyter,

Preacher and Pastor. Permit me now to refer to him for a few moments in a general way, in respect to his private, religious life, and his conduct as a neighbor and citizen. I am speaking to-day to those who are presumed to know what his manner of life was. For nearly twelve years, his home was here. You saw him under all the various circumstances that would be likely to arise in the length of time mentioned. I appeal to you now, not in your partiality as church members, but I appeal to you as his neighbors, irrespective of any denominational preference you may be supposed to hold. I ask the question without the slightest hesitation, did you ever know a Christian man and citizen, whose walk among his fellows was more uniformly just, honest, upright and consistent? Look at the record of those twelve years—follow the whole pathway of his life in your midst—and tell me, can you point to a single blot on that record, or find a crooked step in all the rounds he pursued? I do not hold him up before you in sinless perfection. By no means; for such he was not. What he *was*, and what he *accomplished*, he owed and confessed to the free grace of Almighty God. But this I say, and I believe that all who hear me will unite in the statement, that in his character and person were blended the elements of as true and noble a manhood as ever blessed any community. Infidelity and scepticism may find fault with Christianity, and quarrel with its

teachers; but infidelity and scepticism must shut their mouths and hold their peace, in the presence of such a life as we are contemplating; illustrating, as it did, the ennobling, elevating and purifying power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Here was a man of ripe and large experience, of high mental culture and lofty attainments, laying aside all worldly, selfish ambition, and devoting his strength and energies of mind and body to the good of his fellow-men for both worlds. And even when the infirmities of age were upon him, and while suffering from the loss of vision to such an extent that his dear wife had to become as eyes to him, he still felt constrained by the love of Christ to tell to dying men the sweet story of salvation. With unmurmuring patience he bore the great affliction which it pleased God to lay upon him. He worked on and toiled on cheerful and happy to the last. O think of him on that Sabbath morning, the very day, and only an hour or two before, he went to his bed for the last time—think of him rising early and beginning his preparations to meet his Bible class as usual, that he might unfold to them the knowledge of the word of God. It is a spectacle of moral heroism and of loving devotion to the teachings of the sacred Scriptures. Who will not say, "Servant of God, well done."

To the gentlemen who composed his Bible class, the seat he occupied while instructing them, clothed this morning in the emblems of mourning, will

convey a lesson of profound and tender significance. The voice that spoke to them so often in explanation of the Scriptures of eternal truth, from that place, will speak to them no more. The great heart of love that prompted him, even in his blindness, to appear regularly before them on the Sabbath morning, has ceased to beat. But the blessed Spirit that impelled him to undertake and persist in this work in their behalf, still lives, and I believe, that, in the world of light and joy on high where he now is, the blood-washed soul of our brother has lost none of its interest in the spiritual and eternal welfare of the men whom he prayerfully taught for months, from that seat now so eloquent in its vacancy.

How often have I heard him say, that, "Living or dying we are the Lord's." And so we may say, he died with the harness on. God be praised for such a character, and for the noble work he achieved. Suppose the population of Clay county and of Missouri, were composed wholly of such men as David Coulter. What then? We should have a bright oasis in this desert world of woe! Yea, we would have a paradise restored. The golden chain of charity would in such a case bind the family of man in one loving, happy brotherhood.

The theme of this good man's life and service has grown under the pen; but I must desist, lest I weary you. With a loving heart I have offered

this imperfect tribute to the worth and memory of one of God's devoted servants—as true a friend and brother in Christ as I shall ever know. I would sooner doubt my own existence, than to question the fact that he is this day before the throne of God with exceeding joy—in the land where there is no dimness of vision, but where every eye is clear, and the glorious King is seen in His beauty.

Farewell, my brother! Yet again I hope to share in your fellowship. In a little while we shall sing together.

"Oh how sweet it will be in that beautiful land,
So free from all sorrow and pain,
With songs on our tongues, and harps in our hands,
To meet one another again."

REMINISCENCES.

[The following incidents were furnished by Rev. J. G. Fackler.]

DR. COULTER was noticeable for his usually grave and sober manner, and they who did not know him well, were ignorant of the vein of humor which those intimately acquainted with him sometimes discovered. His letters, written in the freedom of confidence to friends, were often spiced with a playfulness absolutely charming. We give an incident, bearing on this subject, which, for genuine humor, is very pleasing. Many years ago, there lived in Central Missouri, a lady, now dead, of unquestioned piety, of fine culture, and remarkable for her fondness for pleasantry. During a meeting of Presbytery, Dr. Coulter was her guest. She had known him for some years and loved to hear him preach, but she had an impression he was so sober and sedate, that she must not, under any circumstances, indulge in anything like merry-making in his presence.

About that period, a minister of another denomination was enjoying a wonderful reputation as a pulpit orator, his fame being heralded far and wide. He had been in the State only a short time, but the lady had heard much of his eloquence and power as a public speaker. As Dr. Coulter had heard him preach, she was anxious to learn from him what were his impressions concerning one whose praises were on every tongue. He told her that he was certainly a finished orator and deserving of the encomiums passed upon him. Then, after a moment's pause, without any apparent change of manner, he proceeded to say: "From what I have heard about him, I should take him to be a man of *very large-hearted benevolence*." The lady, assuming an attitude of eager expectation, inquired to know in what way this benevolence had manifested itself. The answer came from his lips, without a smile even: "*I have been told he has recently married a widow with seven children.*" If Dr. Coulter did not smile, the lady, who was herself a bright widow with several children, greeted the wholly unexpected humor with ringing and prolonged laughter. From that time, she declared she would "*never be afraid of Mr. Coulter again.*"

IT was characteristic of Dr. Coulter, that he could always find a bright side to everything, and hence, no matter what were his surroundings, he

preserved a happy equipoise. The following incident brings out finely the trait to which we refer: In the winter of 1852, he went with a young brother minister and his wife to a small village for the purpose of conducting a meeting of several days' duration. The weather was exceedingly disagreeable, and the roads in execrable condition. The journey of twenty miles or more, had to be made in what was called a "*mud wagon*," drawn by four wretchedly refractory horses, driven by a constantly fretting driver. The house in which the services were held was untidy and often filled with smoke and the cries of a number of children in arms. Through the whole, Dr. Coulter bore himself with perfect equanimity. When the party were ready to return homewards, and after they were seated most uncomfortably in the crowded stage, or "*mud wagon*," the young minister said: "Brother Coulter, don't you think we poor preachers have a pretty hard time?" "Oh no," said he, with entire composure, and as if he were actually enjoying the experience — "I think we have a good time. We generally associate with the best people. Where we stop, we get the best bed, and if there is anything good to eat, we are certain to get our share. Altogether, it might be very much worse." The young preacher felt the force of the answer, and has long since learned to practice Dr. Coulter's philosophy, by looking on the bright side.

[Rev. J. P. Foreman writes:]

I CANNOT now recall when I first became acquainted with Bro. Coulter. But after he lost his sight, and was compelled to cease from the regular work of the ministry, I removed to Liberty (in 1872) to take charge of the church there. As it was the home of Bro. Coulter, I had the rare privilege of being directly associated with him for nearly three years.

His one great desire was to preach — to glorify the Lord in saving the lost. And it would have been perfectly natural for him, when partially laid aside from this his life-work, to take a dark view of the mysterious providence resting upon him. But during the whole time, I never heard him utter one word of complaint. In talking of his afflictions, (as we frequently did), and why he was prevented from engaging in his work, he would only say: "I cannot understand it. It is the Lord's will" — but never a murmur. He ever possessed that true child-like faith which enabled him cheerfully to submit to the will of the Lord and to feel that all was for the best.

During the time of my association with him, we talked upon almost every subject relating to the interests of the Church, but especially of her great work. He was full of wisdom and grace, and his counsel was always exceedingly judicious; and it was safe to follow his advice. This was true as to the Church in general as well as to the

individual Christian. I have watched him closely in the Session and Presbytery and Synod. I have been with him on special committees under the most trying circumstances, and his aim ever and always was to do right. He could come as near divesting himself of all prejudice and of all personal feelings as any one I have ever known. When called upon to give an opinion, the only question with him was, What is right? What is duty? What is the Lord's will? And, having come to a conclusion, he was firm, for he could always give a reason for his convictions.

And yet he was charitable towards others and considerate of their views and feelings; and, I would say here, that I never heard him speak an unkind word of any one. However much he might differ in opinion from others, he never permitted himself to say anything derogatory to their character. If he had nothing good to say, he said nothing. And I verily believe that he possessed that charity which is so beautifully described in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. I would not say that he was perfect, for none are such. He was human, and, as I have often heard him say, with tears in his eyes, he was only a sinner saved by grace. But I can, with all truthfulness, say, that I have never associated with one who lived so constantly at the throne of grace, and who hid himself more completely behind the cross, and who possessed more of the spirit of

the Master. This was clearly manifest to all who ever saw him in the pulpit. There Christ and Him crucified was the one all-absorbing theme.

But it is of him as a Christian man especially that I now bear my testimony. And from a long, personal and most intimate acquaintance, it affords me great pleasure to testify that he was faithful in every respect even unto the end. I consider it one of the great blessings of my life to have been permitted for so long a time to sit at the feet and to take counsel of such a man of God — one so full of the Spirit and possessed of such varied and deep experience.

In trouble, he was a safe adviser; in sorrow, a gentle comforter; and in affliction, a true sympathizer. From a heart overflowing with love and tenderness, he gently led the distressed and suffering into the green pastures and beside the still waters.

[J. S. Copes, M. D., of New Orleans, son of Rev. Joseph Copes, mentioned in the Autobiography, furnishes, at the request of Mrs. Coulter, the following interesting recollections.]

I SUPPOSE my earliest acquaintance with Dr. Coulter was formed when he visited my father's house in company with his mother; though it may have originated at the church where the children of the congregation were carefully trained in Scripture recitations and the Shorter Catechism. This was done on Sabbath mornings before the

regular church services began, always by the pastor, if present, and never elsewhere than on the benches around the long communion tables, unless they proved insufficient to seat the catechumens. These were of all sizes, from the little prattler just learning "the chief end of man," to "the grown-up young lady," or "gentleman." It was a stated and continuous exercise in, and a process of, Scriptural instruction, running through the periods of childhood and youth, and reaching, in many cases, beyond the epoch of a personal profession of discipleship. Be this as it may of our first meeting, a little later, both of us attended the same secular school, in which pupils of either sex and of any age below majority, were taught.

It was a good school, especially for the younger children. The teacher being able and ambitious, the older students kind and exemplary, some of them possessing gifts that enabled them to acquire with facility — the general conditions were well suited to stimulate and encourage the younger ones to profitable efforts in ascending the paths of learning and deportment. It was a *neighborhood* and almost a *tribal* school, for though it could not, with certainty, be said that every pupil in it was related, nearly or remotely, by blood, to every other pupil, still, that kindred, in some degree, obtained extensively, must be conceded. David, the son of Jesse, was no exception to this rule. He was linked and interlinked with the old

Cool Spring families, till it was difficult for him to know who among them was not his cousin, in some branch or other, of his wide-spreading genealogical tree.

In study, he was no laggard. He seemed to meet no difficulties, so far as I can remember, in any of the departments of study comprised in our limited curriculum; and intimately as I knew him, I recall no instance of any punishment or reproof ever administered to him for either neglect or misbehavior. Nobody seemed to expect from him anything less than uniform good deportment and commendable progress in study. He could play about as well as other boys, though he was not robust in his general physical organism; but he never quarreled, nor was he ever accused or even suspected of any meanness, so far as my memory can retrospect those pleasant years.

Perhaps I ought to write something relating to the structure of society as it was comprised in and influenced by the Cool Spring church and congregation of that day. But, upon reflection, I forbear, for the reason that I could scarcely describe or philosophize upon it without betraying a love of nativity and of early associations, such as would cause the impartial reader to conclude that the glamour of early and happy childhood is still predominating over the soberer reflections proper to advanced years — that the roseate hues

in the atmosphere of a primal home, are still upon the vision. But as it pertains to the birthright of my friend, and strongly tended to make him what he was, I will state the facts that the whole tone and tint of the church and congregation was Scottish; that its pastoral succession, from the days of Wm. Penn, who donated the ample grounds upon which its first edifice was erected, down to the present day, presents names that would serve as synonyms for piety, learning, courage and affectionate devotion to Christ and to the flock over whom the Holy Ghost made them overseers.

For generations, under these pastors, of whom Mr. Irving Spence, in his "Letters on the Early History of the Presbyterian Church in America," has preserved a record,* this originally sterling Christian stock continued to transmit the doctrines and polity of their beloved Church to their children and children's children. The church was in the family as well as in the congregation, so that even tender childhood could define "effectual calling" as well as other essentials of discipleship.

The names of some of these pastors having been mentioned in the autobiography of Dr. Coulter, it will not be out of place here to complete the catalogue, so far as the church records afford the means to do so.

*A rare book, for a copy of which I am indebted to my excellent friend, Rev. James L. Vallandigham, D. D., of Newark, Delaware.

The Rev. Abraham DeWitt, in a letter to Mr. Spence, under date Feb. 17th, 1837, writes: "The early [earliest] records of the congregations of Lewes, Cool Spring and probably also of Indian River, are lost." "The first Presbyterian clergyman who made any considerable residence in the county of Sussex was a Mr. Black. It is certain he was in Lewestown in the year 1708." "The next was Mr. Thompson, for whom was built the old brick church, as evidenced by the letters J. T., and the figures 1728.* By an extract taken from the Session book of Rehoboth church, Somerset county, Maryland, by the Rev. Joseph Copes, it appears that the Rev. John Thompson was ordained at Lewestown in 1717. The Rev. Josiah Martin, from Ireland, was the next pastor. His ministry was somewhere between the years 1728 and 1756, and his remains were interred before the pulpit of the Presbyterian church in Lewestown. Next came Rev. Hector Allison, the duration of whose pastorate is not known from record or entirely reliable tradition. In May, 1756, Rev. Matthew Wilson was ordained and installed at Lewes.† This eminent and useful minister and pastor died March 31st, 1790. The Rev. Francis Hindman was installed at Cool Spring, October 27th, 1791.

* Built into the wall with bluish glazed bricks.

† Usually written in the Church and other records of that day Lewestown.

After these come Rev. John Burton, A. M., Rev. James P. Wilson, D. D., Rev. Joseph Copes, V. D. M., Rev. Benjamin Ogden, A. M., Rev. John Mitchelmore, V.D.M., and Rev. Abraham DeWitt."

Here the list given by pastor DeWitt to Mr. Spence terminates; but I am able to testify concerning the long and highly useful pastorate of Rev. Cornelius H. Mustard, A. M., a school-mate and cousin of Dr. Coulter; and of the faithful labors now bestowed by Rev. J. B. Adams, A. M., who, several years since, succeeded Rev. Mr. Mustard after his decease.

Among such a people, shone brightly and steadily, in all the walks of Christian duty, the family of Jesse Coulter, father of my friend, of whom I write. I was too young to remember him, but I do not, in the least degree, question the local traditions of his exemplary piety and wise family government. Mrs. Coulter and David gave sufficient cause to all observers whose minds were cultured in Scripture biography, for the association of their names with those of Hannah and Samuel; and it was very pleasant to trace the resemblances. I think the tone and conduct of the loving pastor, whose name Dr. Coulter so affectionately mentions, towards this excellent Christian lady and her children, was none the less kind, because of the deeply theocratic cast of her character.

While David was still only a school boy, this

tender under-shepherd seemed to regard him as a dedicated future prophet of Jehovah, to teach the people righteousness and proclaim the Gospel of Christ's salvation to perishing sinners. This was evidenced in word and deed, and especially by the pleasure he enjoyed in having this sprightly and docile son of his pious neighbor and parishioner at his own house, among his own children and under his instructions. To human view, his death was a serious loss to David, as well as to the Church and to his family; but all this we must humbly surrender and commit to that Sovereign Ruler who doeth all things well. It caused a personal separation of David and myself when I was less than eleven years old; my guardian living in a part of that large county remote from Cool Spring church. We never were in the same school thereafter, though we occasionally met, and always as brothers might have done. He remained on his ancestral farm until, as related in his autobiography, he left it for Lafayette College, Pennsylvania. Our last meeting was at the General Assembly of 1846, of which he was a commissioner from Missouri. We traveled West together as far as Cincinnati, where we separated to meet no more on earth. Both of us highly enjoyed this somewhat lengthened intercourse, which served well to renew and strengthen our early bonds of esteem and affection, and we parted as brothers part.

His Christian experience leading to a public confession of Christ, is, I think, as fully portrayed in his autobiography as a meek and modest spirit like his could afford to detail it. I always believed that he became a Christian in very early life, and I profoundly doubt whether he could ever have named any point of time at which his young heart did not love Jesus.

I never heard any of his famous temperance addresses, though I am not ignorant of the impressions made by them in his native county. The Cool Spring youth certainly made his mark, and a shining one, in this connection, before he went to college. He awoke the echoes in the hearts and consciences of the aged and the young; astonishing even his intimate friends with the pungency and vigor of his appeals against the use of all intoxicants. His success was marked and enduring.

Before I conclude, I will give a word of explanation as to the names of churches mentioned in my quotations from Mr. Spence. *Lewes* is a seaport town near Cape Henlopen and a place of summer resort for visitors from the coast cities above, and from the towns of the Delaware and Chesapeake Peninsula. Even now, as then, it is often called Lewestown. Indian River church, like Cool Spring, was apart from any town. These three churches, under the pastorates of the Wilsons, Copes, Ogden and Mitchelmore, were

united. Previous to the days of Dr. Matthew Wilson and subsequent to those of Mr. Mitchelmore, they have not so ranged themselves. There are two Rehoboth churches; the oldest, in Somerset county, Md., claiming to be the most ancient Presbyterian church on the continent; the other in Sussex, Del., on the seacoast, near Lewes; both in the same Presbytery.

Mr. Irving Spence, from whose history I have extracted portions, was an eminent lawyer of Snowhill, Worcester county, Md., and a ruling elder in that venerable Presbyterian church. These quotations are abridged so as to avoid tediousness, and yet, in this appropriate connection, to present the names of honored ministers who made their impress for good upon the population of the Peninsula and trained such families in the Church of God as have produced the missionaries and exemplars of righteousness to succeeding generations in this and in foreign lands. I regard the subject of this letter and his near relative. the Rev. C. H. Mustard, mentioned above in the catalogue of pastors, as fair and honest illustrations of the sequences from family and pastoral training, such as these peninsular churches enjoyed. Other examples of both sexes are by no means wanting, of thorough consecration to Christ, so far as human beings can make it, to work and endure for His sake, in any field to which He might call them. The very same self-

abnegation that led Coulter to a Western frontier, carried a near lady relative of his to the American Indians, and another female missionary to northern India, to give her whole soul and even her life to the work of proclaiming Christ's great salvation.

But I cannot here allude to individuals who have illustrated the mighty power of the grace of God in lives of faith and patience under multiplied trials. They are many; and it is a precious privilege for those of us who knew them in their lives, to refresh our recollections of their virtues as we sometimes pass through the cemeteries of those original American churches, and read the inscriptions upon the marbles erected to the memories of their worthy dead. One of these affords a specimen and gives forth an enduring tone in harmony with the doctrines and the paternal pastoral oversight, under which generation after generation was trained in the faith of the Bible. I do not know but Dr. Coulter gives this epitaph in his autobiography; but whether so or not, it is so beautifully expressive of the dying thoughts of a devoted pastor that it will bear repeating. Along the broad entrance through the cemetery, to the front of Cool Spring church, by the side of his wife, lies the pastor of Dr. Coulter's childhood and early youth. Being dead, he yet speaketh a doctrine and a monition.

"In yonder sacred house I spent my breath;
Now silent, mouldering here, I lie in death;
But I shall rise again, and yet declare
A dread amen to truths I published there."
(J)

Under conditions so favorable to the development of a deeply religious and noble character, based upon enlightened and strong convictions, was the subject of this partial memoir born and reared. A child of faith and prayer, he was, very probably, from early infancy, devoted by his mother to the work of the Gospel ministry. At any rate, as all who observed her knew, this wise and godly widow performed the faithful mother's part by sowing the seeds of biblical knowledge and a sacred influence in the hearts of her children. The loss of their pious father, so far from causing an extinction of the flame upon the altar of morning and evening sacrifice, only purified and increased the importunity of faith with which this theocratic parent entreated for the special protection and guidance promised to the fatherless and the widow. That her prayers were answered and her faith approved and rewarded, let results partly shown in the life and labors of her worthy children, and especially in those of her darling son, ever testify.

I am sorry, my dear madam, that adverse events have so sadly prevented the time and attention I should otherwise most cheerfully have given to the fulfillment of your request. To produce a biographical sketch of the early years of your husband, such as would have done the subject justice, could not be otherwise than highly gratifying to the writer, and I regret that the duty did not secure the services of an abler pen.

I could not undertake anything relating to his professional life, but this, I doubt not, will be well done by another.

[From Rev. J. L. Yantis, D. D.]

YOUR letter of recent date was received several days ago. I would have answered it at once, but for the reason that, for several weeks past, I have not been able to write legibly. About a month ago I had, as was supposed, a slight attack of paralysis, affecting mainly my right side, and rendering me incapable of anything like labor, either of body or mind. It has never given me much pain, and I am so far recovered as to get about clumsily.

I looked upon Rev. David Coulter as the most perfect specimen of the Christian minister I have ever known. I wish I was in condition to give the reasons for that opinion, but am not. I will only say this: I have known Bro. Coulter during the third of a century, have had opportunities to know him well, and, after weighing well what I say, I declare I never knew him to do a wrong thing and never heard him say a wrong word, either publicly or privately. I never knew a man who lived seemingly so constantly under the conviction that he was an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I know these are strong words, but they were well considered before they were written.

[Rev. James A. Quarles writes:]

REV. DAVID COULTER, D. D., was, in several respects, a remarkable man. Having known him from my early boyhood, he grew upon me to the very last.

He was remarkable for his *suavity*. True to his convictions of the right, there was never an element of bitterness in his antagonism to those who might oppose him. With all this, there was no man who held more steadfastly to what he believed to be true. He held the truth in love.

He was remarkable as an earnest *preacher* of the Gospel, the pure Gospel, apart from all contamination and side issues. His speech and his preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

He was remarkable as a *theologian*. He had not his equal in Western Missouri. He was our living standard of orthodoxy. The strong meat of Paul and of the 17th century was never more thoroughly digested, and Westminster College never more highly honored itself, as appreciating real merit, than when it declared him to be a teacher of theology, a Doctor of Divinity.

He was remarkable as a *Christian*. In my intercourse with the world, I have known but few such. In the simplicity, earnestness, depth of his piety, he reminded me of Dr. Chas. Hodge, whom the heart of our Church has canonized as

one of the saintliest of men. I have known no man in the West who was as near an Enoch as Dr. Coulter.

Altogether, he was the Doric column of our temple in Missouri.

[Rev. W. C. McPheeters, of Liberty, says:]

MY more intimate association with the late Rev. David Coulter, D. D., dates from the Fall of 1866, at which time he assumed the relation of Stated Supply to the church at this place. There being no suitable house at the time in town for him, he and his dear wife remained at my house, about three miles in the country, for five or six months.

During their temporary stay in my family, the seeds of that sympathy and tender regard were sown which have since ripened into the most sincere affection.

Dr. Coulter was, undoubtedly, the most unworldly and consecrated man I ever knew. So great was his devotion to his profession, as Christ's disciple, that he actually shrank from financial transactions. He impressed all about him with a sense of his perfect purity. I remember, as an illustration of this fact, on one occasion, during his stay with me, he had a horse which was unsuited to his purpose, and desiring to make some exchange, I undertook the matter, and soon had different men calling in to "make a trade."

He would invariably come and point out to the purchaser each defect in the animal, and state, with the utmost precision, every imperfection in his form, habits and disposition. Once, after reciting all the objectionable features in the case, he turned away and left me alone with the gentleman. After he was gone, the man inquired his name, and mounting his horse, remarked: "I cannot trade with any one so honest, for, if I were to cheat him, as my selfishness would direct, I should never be able to sleep soundly," and so rode away.

Through every department of his active and arduous life, this inward purity attended him, and blended with it was a becoming humility, which, in its all-pervading character and gentle meekness, I have never seen equaled in any other one man.

These graces imparted to his character a loveliness which, in every condition of his life, disclosed a more than earthly beauty, a holy radiance, seen alike in prosperity and adversity, in sickness and in health. As the beholder gazed upon the heavenly purity and humility of his character, displayed in his unmurmuring, cheerful and entire submission to the Divine will, the conviction was made upon his mind with an overwhelming power, that Bro. Coulter realized indeed that he was not his own. His conduct seemed to speak out the oft-repeated language of his lips, that "Living or dying, we are the Lord's."

During the twelve years of his ministration here, his heart seemed to grow more and more zealous for the growth of Christ's kingdom, and in every sermon I ever heard him preach, he hid himself behind the cross, and preached Christ and Him crucified. He often said in the pulpit, and out of it, that the sinner must be wrapped in Christ's righteousness.

It was my privilege to be much with him in his last illness, and to contemplate the sublime spectacle of so great a man while in the very arms of the King of Terrors, calmly resting in the sweet consciousness that, as he said on the night of his death, "I am wrapped in the robe of Christ's righteousness." The last word he uttered on earth was the *amen* so beautifully pronounced by his meek and submissive life among us here for twelve years.

The good of all denominations, who have known him, have loved him, and will cherish his memory as one of the purest of earth's redeemed ones.

The rich fragrance of his life will long be felt in its sweet and hallowing influence upon the people, with a more than common sorrow for the dead. He lived a life which spoke in plain accents, Amen, and he died with the sweet amen upon his lips.

I have tried to add my tribute to the memory of one whom I loved and revered, but feel that my effort has been a feeble one.

[Rev. Rob't P. Kerr writes:]

IT is a real pleasure for me to add my testimony to that of many others who have known and loved your dear husband.

While I was a student at William Jewell College, he was my spiritual father, and to his kind faithfulness I shall ever feel indebted. He was, in all things, characterized by most scrupulous honesty. This may seem to be a very commonplace compliment, but it is not so. *Honest men*, who are honest with their fellows, are not found every day. He was honest with me, and hesitated not to risk my good opinion of him by telling me my faults, as well as to commend what he approved. He admonished me as to my duty in observing the laws of health, which I was violating at the command of an over-mastering ambition. "Nature," said he, "will bring in her bill after awhile, and you will *have it to pay*." He considered it a real sin for a young man to abuse his health, and considered those who were guilty, to deserve rather blame than praise.

It was by him that I was first led to pray in public. With his usual firmness and knowledge of human nature, he said, leaning over as he walked up the aisle, "I will call on you to pray, directly," and, without giving me time to refuse, passed on. Never shall I forget his honest and faithful presentation of the Gospel. It was *symmetrical* preaching. No particular topics were

unduly emphasized, but Bible doctrine in Bible proportion was his rule. I can see his face before me in memory now, as he stood in the Liberty pulpit, and with love to God and men beaming in every feature, preached as uniformly able sermons as I ever heard from any man.

His humility was conspicuous in all his life. One cold winter morning, after I had staid at his house at his earnest request, to avoid an unpleasant ride home, I heard some one coming into my room to make a fire for me to dress by. Imagine my embarrassment when I saw that grand old Christian saint coming in, all covered with snow, with his arms full of wood. He was always ready to serve any one, and all with so much kindness, that it was impossible not to love him.

His religious character was the strongest feature of his life. Pre-eminently, he was a Christian. He was always so. Unlike some men, whose piety is often obscured by other things, he had no higher ambition than to be his Master's servant everywhere. The effect of such a life as this can never be measured. It had a far-reaching influence that was felt in all the courts of the Church and in all the affairs of home and society. I have never seen a man whose name carried greater respect where he was known; and I do not suppose a whisper was ever uttered against it. It will live long in the memory of those who loved him, and through their lives, inspired by him, "though dead, he yet speaketh."

When he died, a hero fell; "one who never feared the face of man;" one who never compromised the truth with God's enemies; a man who loved men, and whom men loved; who loved God, and whom God loved; a man like his Master.

[Mrs. Jessie Wallace, of Lee's Summit, writes:]

WE received your welcome letter a few days since, and hasten to answer, as you request. We go heart and hand with you in your benevolent enterprise in behalf of Westminster. It is certainly a philanthropic mission you undertake, and would, undoubtedly, meet your esteemed husband's warmest approval, were he living. Nor are we less interested in your giving to the world an account of the life and labors of one who so unreservedly dedicated himself to the Master's service, as did our dear friend. I have often thought he was a most complete counterpart of the Nathaniel whom our Savior pronounced an "Israelite in whom there is no guile." I ever found him tenaciously adhering to an exact statement of the truth, even to the very letter.

His memory was so correct, that even in relating an ordinary conversation, you might rely upon every word being exactly as he related it. Hence, everybody who knew him felt satisfied, if he asserted anything, it was the "truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." The three characteristic elements of his nature, were humil-

ity, sincerity and simplicity. A character built upon such a foundation as this, could be scarcely less than perfect. I mean so far as perfection is attainable in this life. I consider it one of the blessings of my life, to have made his acquaintance at an age to be impressed and influenced by his wise counsel and consistent example. I remember, on one occasion, remarking in his presence, that I had promised to do a certain thing, but had determined not to do it, as it made no difference to the individual. He very quietly said, "but it makes much difference to yourself, whether you keep your promises or not." This remark led me to look upon the fulfillment of promises in a very different light from what I had ever done before, and stamped upon my character a scrupulousness in the performance of promises, that might never have found an impress there, but for this "apple of gold in picture of silver."

I remember, at another time, asking him if he did not think one might, with propriety, wear earrings? He promptly replied, "yes, with just as much propriety as to wear a ring in your nose." I don't think I have ever seen a lady wearing earrings since, that I did not think of his well-timed, effective reproof to me, and never, from that day, have I had the slightest desire for such ornaments or show.

I mention these trifling incidents, to show how wisely and unoffendingly he was able to adminis-

ter a merited reproof. This faculty, I thought, was one of his fortes. When dining with him once at the house of a friend, a gentleman at the table remarked, "he did not like the tenacity and intolerance with which Presbyterians held to their views — that they were arbitrary in contending for their belief of the truth." Mr. Coulter, with more warmth and enthusiasm than was his wont to show, replied: "Yes, the history of the Church for ages corroborated the fact that Presbyterians have, in every struggle against Satan and infidelity, been first and foremost to raise the standard for truth and defend it with their voice, their pen and their lives, if need." The gentleman was so taken aback, he could not reply, but said afterwards, "I was not expecting a shot from that quarter. I thought Mr. C. so much of a Moses that a man might say what he pleased without raising his Irish." It always seemed to me, he was ever the man to say the right thing at the right time. There was an appropriateness and point in his conversation that never failed to interest and instruct, and sometimes to amuse. I once heard a lady say to him, when bowing under a very heavy bereavement, "I shall rejoice when the time comes to be joined to the loved ones who have gone before me to heaven." "Do you not think," he said, "there is danger of your desiring to gain the heavenly inheritance more to be with your loved ones, than to be in the pres-

ence of your blessed Savior?" She said, "she had not before thought of it, but it was a fact, that she dwelt much more on being united with them than with her Savior."

I never knew a man better fitted to soothe and comfort a sorrowing heart; there was a softness and gentleness about his manner well calculated to calm the troubled spirit. But more than this, he had an exhaustless fund of rich consolation, drawn from the blessed Bible, that was held in his retentive mind, ready to be administered, as circumstances might demand. I have never known any great sorrow, that he has not come to me with tender, sympathizing words, so willing to do all in his power to staunch the bleeding heart and hold up to suffering nature the precious promises given in the Book of inspiration to God's sorrowing children. And now, that he has gone to his rest, I feel that I have lost a friend whose place cannot be filled.

I have often thought of the latter years of his life, why it was that one who had so wholly followed the Lord should be so afflicted, suffer such pain and have the world shut out from his earthly vision. But the Lord, who reigns, we know had some wise purpose to fulfill, some good to accomplish, which, though hid from us now, will all be made plain in His own good time. His case has certainly exemplified to the world, that there are more than one

of God's servants who could, in the midst of sore trial and affliction, maintain their integrity, and not only faithfully do, but cheerfully suffer, the Master's will. I have a vivid impression of the many pleasant and profitable hours I have been privileged to spend with him, and many impressions for good, I trust, have been made upon my heart and life. Surely, no man ever held up to my view more distinctly and attractively and impressively the duties and obligations of life, than he did. Truly it may be said of him, as it was of Abel, "he being dead, yet speaketh."

LETTERS

OF

CONDOLENCE

BY DR. COULTER.

LETTERS OF CONDOLENCE.

LIBERTY, May 14, 1874.

Esteemed Friend:

A letter from your daughter Anna informs me that your health is somewhat impaired, and suggests that it might be pleasant to you to receive a letter from me. My sight is in such a condition as to lead to the use of a pencil in all my correspondence of late. Our general health is about as good as usual. We are, of course, getting older, and feeling, to some extent, the infirmities of age, and are thus being admonished to get our house in order, and be ready for our departure to another world. This would be very sad indeed, if our departure from this life were a leap into the dark. But blessed be the name of our heavenly Father, who has brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel. To the believer in Jesus, dying is but entering into life. It is the gate of endless joy.

I would like to know what are your hopes beyond the grave, and upon what they are founded.

God's word is very plain in telling us that we cannot be saved by works of righteousness done by ourselves. It is equally plain in assuring us that in the Gospel a provision is found fully equal to our wants. "Come," says our heavenly Father, "and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow." "Him that cometh unto me," says the blessed Savior, "I will in no wise cast out." There is in the satisfaction of Jesus Christ, in His perfect obedience, complete atonement, and ever prevalent intercession, that which abundantly meets our necessities. We need, therefore, look no further. We need look nowhere else. This makes the Gospel good news, glad tidings, to sinners such as we are. It is surely a blessed thing to know that Jesus Christ is able to save us because He is God Almighty. He is suited to save us, because He is human; bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. He can feel for us. He is willing to save, for He has shed His blood for us. He invites us to be saved by Him. He has saved many — many such as we. He is ready to save now. Do not hesitate, then, but just as you are, take Him for your Savior. He is yours for the taking as offered in the Gospel. My prayer to God is for your salvation. Delay not, delay not. I should be glad to hear of your restored health, but far more rejoiced to hear of your having a blessed hope in Christ.

Affectionately, D. COULTER.

LIBERTY, Sept. 29, 1874.

Dear Friend:

Some months ago, a letter from Anna informed me of the serious illness of her father, and desired me to write to him, which I did. Since the death of your husband, I received another letter from your daughter, giving us an account of the closing scenes of his life and of the funeral exercises. I was much gratified to learn from that letter, as well as from an obituary in the *O. S. Presbyterian*, that you were not left to sorrow on account of his death as those who have no hope. I felt that there was so much reason to be thankful to our heavenly Father, who doeth all things well, that he was not suddenly cut down, but was so gradually instructed to set his house in order for his departure. I felt thankful, too, that his sickness was so little connected with delirium, and that he was able to converse with his friends so much and so long. I was thankful, also, that his life was spared until your children were so fully grown, thus leaving so many strong hands, and, I trust, willing hearts, to minister to your comfort in your declining years.

I was especially thankful that he was able to say, as he drew nearer the eternal world, that his views of the plan of salvation through Christ, were in any degree clearer. It seems to me so blessed a thing to have a clear view of the way in which God saves us poor sinners. You know it is

said, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

"Just to see the plan and embrace it," said a young convert once to me, "seems to me the whole of it," and he went on his way rejoicing in Jesus. Blessed be God, it is written, "Whosoever — whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

I was glad to learn that so many of your children are professed followers of the Savior. I hope it will not be long before you will be able to say of them all, that you feel that you can rejoice in the evidence they furnish of having passed from death unto life.

My mother was left a widow in straitened circumstances. She told me she had received great comfort from the text, "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." I commend it to you — it is a spring still flowing.

Affectionately, D. COULTER.

[The following letter was written in reply to a request of Mr. Woods, of Glasgow, to preach his funeral sermon, in the event of his death, which he was expecting daily. Mr. Woods was the father-in-law of Rev. J. P. Foreman.]

LIBERTY, April 12, 1877.

Rev. J. P. Foreman:

Dear Brother — Yours of the 7th inst., I found yesterday upon my return from Stewartsville. In

reply, I will say that it will give me a melancholy pleasure to be with you in performing the last sad offices which the living can pay to the dead. I shall be glad to attend to the request of my valued friend, and if I am at home when the telegram arrives, shall hasten to obey the summons, God willing.

I trust that at evening time it may be light with him, and that the Angel of the Covenant may attend him through the dark valley, until the day break and the shadows flee away. And as one whom his mother comforteth, so may the Lord comfort all that mourn. Kind regards to Mrs. Woods, as well as to you and yours.

Yours in Christ, D. COULTER.

LIBERTY, Oct. 24, 1877.

Dear Sister:

We reached home last night and found your letter awaiting our return. We heard of dear little Willie's death on Thursday. We thought often and much of you on that day, and lifted up our hearts to Him who can give light in darkness, and comfort in the hour of affliction. The day was outwardly gloomy enough; and we could but think of the darker cloud that was then overshadowing your hearts and home. We thought of the

last look you were then taking of the pale face and lifeless form of the beloved one, so soon to be taken from the house of the living to the city of the dead. We thought of your great bereavement, and of the desolation that must have come over your hearts as you turned away from the little mound in which lay covered all that was mortal of one so justly dear. We knew, however, that the man of God was with you, and trusted he had been able to open up and apply to your wounded hearts the precious balm of Gospel consolation. We knew who had said, "I will not leave you comfortless;" and doubted not that His presence was there to give you peace. We remembered how He said: "When thou passest through the waters, they shall not overflow thee," that "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." And that as a mother comforteth, so tenderly does He minister sympathy and love to those who trust in Him. You have, indeed, passed under the rod, but it was held by a Father's hand. A dark cloud has been over you, but it had a silver lining.

We cannot tell you how much it cheered our hearts to know he was able to say that he trusted in Christ alone. We had hoped that a bright career was before him. But those buds of hope were not to bloom in this world of sorrow; the plant has been transferred, we trust, to a more genial clime, to flourish and bloom in unfading

freshness and everlasting beauty. The kind Shepherd who carries the Lambs in His arms and folds them to His bosom, can never forget the heart that trusts in Him alone. He knows best how long to suffer it to remain in this unfriendly world, where rude storms and tempests prevail, and when to take it to the sheltering fold above. He knew that we would often be perplexed and unable to understand His dealings with us, and kindly said: "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

The dear boy has left the fragrance of an affectionate heart to sisters and brother and father and mother, the remembrance of which will not soon pass away. His kind consideration and loving regard for his aged grandpa, was so tender and touching; so like a beam of sunshine, that we are sure it has left an impression on his heart, like the memory of joys that are past — sweet, though mournful to the soul.

We trust that our heavenly Father will bless and sanctify this dispensation of His providence to all of us who knew and loved the dear one, and, that trusting in Christ alone, we may join at last with those who have gone before, in rendering unceasing praises to Him that loved us and gave Himself for us.

Affectionately,

D. COULTER.

[The following is a letter of condolence written to Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Hutchins, on the death of a son, upon whom they leaned for support in their declining years.]

LIBERTY, March 19, 1878.

Dear Brother and Sister:

Your letter, bringing the tidings of your affliction, was received this morning. I deeply sympathize with you in your sorrow. The first words of your letter suggest your great consolation: "He fell asleep in Jesus." My first thought was the expression of a learned father upon the death of a beloved son: "my beautiful tree is cut down in the fullness of its bloom." Soon, however, the suggestion arose, "it is only transplanted to a more genial clime, that the fruitage may be purer, more beautiful and precious than it could ever have been on earth."

I know that you are not ignorant of the affliction of Him who, in His love and pity, carried His people all the days of old. As one whom his mother comforteth, so He pours the balm of consolation into the smitten heart which in its sorrow casts its care upon Him. He has assured us that all things work together for good to them that love Him. He sunders the cords that bind us to earth, that He may strengthen those that draw us to heaven. I am glad to know that there was one who could, with gentle hand and tender heart, minister to the suffering one through the tedious days and wearisome nights of the last part of his sickness. I doubt not but there were many others

outside of your own family circle who deeply sympathize with you, and were ready, according to opportunity, to lend their aid. Best of all, we know of One who is touched with a feeling of our infirmity, is a Friend that loveth at all times and sticketh closer than a brother.

I hope that quietness and rest will prove a healing medicine to Mrs. H. and your daughter, whose anxious sympathy has been so long under such severe tension. My prayer is that you may all realize in this hour of your sadness the fullness of the divine consolation. It is His to give unto those who look unto Him, the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Fraternally,

D. COULTER.

LECTURES
TO THE YOUNG

BY DR. COULTER.

I.

1 John ii: 14—"I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong."

Zech. ii: 4—"Run, speak to this young man."

Titus ii: 4, 6—"Teach the young women to be sober." "Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded."

I HAVE selected these several passages, and grouped them together, because they are addressed to the young. The first assumes that young men are strong: "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong." Young women also wield a mighty power upon society. That strength may be a blessing or a curse, according to its direction. Power may be employed to injure and destroy, as well as to benefit and save. There is great power in steam, and, under wise control, it is of great utility; but when it breaks away from proper restraint, it scatters ruin and death all around. So the strength of youth, if properly regulated and directed, draws after it a long train of blessing; but, if misguided, or left to the impulse of passion, leaves naught in its track but wreck and ruin. How very important, therefore, that the strength of youth be wisely regulated — its checks and balances properly adjusted.

"Run, speak to this young man." This implies an important message and urges prompt attention. The message of the angel to Zechariah, related to his country and people; and fain, would I, as God's messenger, bring to you, my youthful friends, a message, which, if duly considered, might confer a lasting benefit upon your country and people. I would hasten to tell you how you may best use the strength which the God of nature and of grace has given you for the benefit of society and the good of your race. I would fain teach you to engrave your names in letters, deep and ineffaceable, upon the rock of posterity's grateful remembrance.

"Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime;
And departing leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time,
Footprints that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, may take heart again."

"Run, speak to this young man." "Teach the young women to be sober." "Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded." Titus, upon whom the duty here specified was enjoined, in the first case, mediately, or by means of others, and in the last case, directly, was himself, in all probability, a young man. He had been called to occupy a responsible position, and was, no doubt, anxious to be instructed and urged to the performance of its duties.

The great duty here inculcated is sobriety. This includes whatever pertains to the proper regulation of the appetites and passions, emotions and desires pertaining to our nature. The idea is that of self-government, under the guidance of the law of the Creator. It requires that we do ourselves no harm, allow no indulgences injurious to our physical, intellectual and moral well-being; but, on the contrary, nourish and cultivate the faculties belonging to all these departments, by legitimate food and exercise. In relation to our fellow-men, it requires that we observe the golden rule: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also unto them." And beyond and above all, we should 'love God with all our heart, soul and mind and strength,' and 'whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, do all to His glory.' Such and so extensive is sobriety of mind as taught in the Word of God.

Having thus briefly considered the passages selected, somewhat with reference to their connection, I think all must admit that they attach great importance to the condition of youth.

Let this, then, be our theme. I will not disguise from myself, or from you, my hearers, that I feel unable to do full justice to the task I have undertaken. I cannot rise to the summit of the high argument. Still a torch may be lighted from a spark, and a suggestion made at the right moment may give a brighter color to all the after history.

If, then, my arrows fall short of the mark, you will not, I trust, condemn the high aim.

The age in which we live is termed, emphatically, a fast age. Men feel that they cannot now afford to wade through a system of philosophy to learn the right principles of action, or go through a body of divinity to arrive at the way of salvation, or the duties of the Christian life. The cry is for brevity and point. He that would speak to effect, must come with thoughts that burn and words that glow. He needs to write with the point of a diamond, and dip his pen in the sunbeam. To such brilliancy of thought and force of expression, I do not claim to have attained; but what I have I freely offer, hoping you may find in it something worthy of your attention, and that the great Master of Assemblies may fasten it as a nail in a sure place.

Your speaker has not so long passed the days of his youth as not to remember much of its hopes and fears, and, alas, many of its dreams and foibles, too. If he be not able to present an example worthy of imitation, he may, at least, draw something from its defects and mistakes which may serve as beacon lights to warn others of the dangers of the way.

A strong inducement for addressing youth, is the fact that they are to form the moral character of the next generation. With them, a pure morality and an earnest piety, is to be kept alive and

flourish, or to decline and die out of the land. They are to be heads of families, centers and fountains of influence. It is sad to think that in the family of the son, there may be less of piety than in that of the father; in the family of the daughter, less of devotion to God than in that of the mother. We would gladly do what in us lies, that it may be otherwise. We would have the stream of ancestral piety deepen and widen as it rolls, that it may pour into eternity a mighty flood of blessed waters.

But all have not pious parents. These, too, we would gladly benefit. They, too, may become the blessed of the Lord and open up new fountains of blessing to coming generations.

But upon what basis may I hope to secure a resting place for the thoughts I have to offer? I see before me forms of animated nature peculiar. The Creator, says an ancient poet, formed the beasts with countenances bending to earth; man He made in figure upright, and taught him to look to the heavens. Man, above all earth's inhabitants, is endowed with reason. He rises far above mere creature instinct. He can look before, and after, and judge of the future by the past. Who can tell what an amount of intellect lies slumbering in the youthful part of this audience? What mighty energies lie dormant to be developed here for weal or for woe? How great the impress it may make upon the present

generation, or leave indelibly fixed upon that which is to come.

You are capable of aspiring, aye, and of attaining to something noble and good. Capable of an earnest and ruling desire to live to some good purpose. Capable of feeling the power of obligation binding you to live for the good of your own immortal nature, your country, your race and the glory of your Creator.

Were it otherwise, I might well feel that any effort of mine would be as water spilled upon the ground. If there was no moral basis, no sense of virtue, no feeling of honor, no generous sensibility; if all were selfish and sordid, swayed by naught but appetite and passion, then, indeed, it were as well to cast pearls before swine, and hope thus to benefit them, as to spend labor here. I build my hope of ministering to your good in this effort, on the fact, then, that you are rational beings, and can feel also the force of moral obligation; but more especially upon the fact that there is a divinity which shapes men's ends, and He has said, "in the morning sow thy seed;" and again, "as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accom-

plish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

I. The importance of youth is seen in the fact that it is the seed-time of life; and there is but one such seed-time. There is but one season of youth. It is longer than the season of a single year, but once past, it returns no more. We shall never be again what we are in our youthful years. There are feelings and emotions, an elasticity of mind and body, a susceptibility and capability peculiar to that period. It is life in bud and blossom, and it will bud and blossom but once.

Again; it is the commencement of a voyage that knows no return. We may have contrary winds and be called to struggle with many a storm, but we cannot put back. We are outward bound and must make our port on the other side of life's ocean. It becomes us to see to it that we have a trusty pilot, a true chart, a sea-worthy bark, well rigged and well stored for our voyage. We shall need them all before we reach the distant harbor. Alas! for the want of such preparation, many a noble vessel, sailing o'er life's solemn main, has been foundered and lost. Alas! upon the sea of life, are the fragments of many a wreck. It is the beginning of a journey that is ever onward. We never turn back to undo what has been done, to do what has been neglected, or to improve what has been poorly performed. We may try to counteract habits formed or mistakes committed,

but we cannot separate them from our history. Sometimes a wrong step in the beginning has sent the traveler limping all the rest of his journey. A youthful indiscretion has been a blot upon the record of his life, never forgotten. A youthful folly has risen up a dark cloud in his sky, never dissipated. Like the waters of the Missouri to the Mississippi, it has given a tinge to all the after current.

On the other hand, a right course at the commencement, may be like the beginning of dawn, growing brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. Life may thus be like the gushing forth of a clear spring, and go on deepening and widening, everywhere dispersing fertility and gladness. Though the channel be rough and uneven, and the stream be now tumbling over rocks, and now rushing through narrow passes, yet everywhere will its waters shine forth with crystal clearness, flashing in the sunlight or gleaming in the moonbeam.

Thus may youth maintain a character, pure and unsullied, which all hopefully reflecting minds shall be constrained to admire: in public, where their deeds stand out to the gaze of the world, or in private, where their conduct is seen by few, ever maintaining a conscience void of offence before God and man. Surely, if youth is the seed-time, the starting point, the forming period of life, and if "as the twig is bent the tree's in-

clined," we cannot too highly estimate the value of youth. It is the fountain from whence must flow the stream of life. Its first direction may determine, for good or evil, its future course.

John Randolph, of Roanoke, once said, "I believe I should have been swept away by the flood of French infidelity, had it not been for the remembrance of the time when my sainted mother used to make me kneel by her side, take my little hand folded in hers, and cause me to repeat the Lord's prayer."

The character of Napoleon Bonaparte was formed in youth. His weak but ambitious friends taught him that he would one day be a great conqueror. To inspire him with the same feelings, they formed mimic armies and set him at the head of them, gave him a love of conquest and predominance, and thus laid the basis of his future character. The plays of his childhood made him the ambitious tyrant, and sent him like a scourge across the continent of Europe.

Hume was a skeptic. It is said that in his early days he was a devout and conscientious believer in the Word of God, but, while young, in some debating association, was appointed to bring forward, for sake of controversy, the arguments of the infidel. He consented. He studied long; brought his acute mind into contact with the sophistry of skeptics, and, ere he was aware of it, had embraced their notions. Like melted

lava, his mind received skeptical impressions, and then congealed, and his whole life bore the deformed and unsightly image of infidelity.

It is said of Voltaire, one of the most brilliant writers of his age, that when five years old, he committed to memory an infidel poem, and was never able after that to undo its pernicious influence upon his mind. He lived and died a corrupter of the world, and thousands who have been ruined by him, will bewail his memory to all eternity. How true is it,

> "If good we plant not, vice will fill the place,
> And rankest weeds the richest soil deface."

II. The importance of youth may be further argued from the fact that around it cluster so many fond hopes. There centers the parents' fondest expectation. What sacrifices are they not ready to make for their youthful charge. For this, they are ready to undergo many privations and submit to large expenditures. They feel that if that season is suffered to pass by without improvement, the future prospect must be cheerless. If Spring put forth no blossoms, in Summer there will be no beauty, and in Autumn, no fruit. Youth passed away in idleness, prepares the way for vicious manhood, and ignoble, if not infamous, old age. Hence, the hearts of all virtuous parents are turned with great anxiety to their youthful charge. They mark their footsteps, and when

they see them take a right direction, the father's heart is glad and the fond mother sings for joy.

If, then, there is truth in parental perceptions — if there is true ground for a father's care and a mother's anxiety, it all proves the importance of the season of youth.

To the same effect are all the efforts made for the education of youth by the community and the State. Every school-house, academy and college throughout the land, are so many standing witnesses to the importance of the condition of youth. So, also, every dollar appropriated by State legislation for the purpose of youthful education. We mourn the fact that true educators are so few. There are many guilders, but few employed in coining pure gold. Many use great swelling words in advertisements, but few are willing to endure the toil of moulding mind after a high model. The most flashy signs mark the toy-shop, or play-house; the place where substantial articles are sold, usually bears a modest front. But let this pass. The youth are the hope of families, of the State, of the Church and of the world.

III. Youth is an important period in regard to self-government. The heart of man is naturally wayward and perverse. Hence, government should begin early. A child, left to himself, bringeth his father to shame. Parent, if you do not govern your child, he will govern you. If you do not

correct him, he will correct you, and that with a lash armed with scorpion stings, laid on with a force that shall draw blood from your very heart. Child, you must learn to submit to lawful authority, or you are sealed over to a life of infamy and a death of shame. Subjection to lawful authority is a very important part of youthful training. First in the family, next in the school, and last in the State, not omitting the Church of God. Neglect of this in the family is a sore evil and prepares the way for insubordination in all that follows. The ungoverned youth is the teacher's annoyance, often a ring-leader in college rebellions; in the house of God, a disturber; in the community, a fomenter of quarrels; unstable and impulsive, fit material for a mob, ready to place passion upon the throne of justice, and, in accordance with her dictates, murder the innocent as well as the guilty. Youth is the season for receiving into the mind the true principles of self-government. My young friends, you must learn the art of self-government, or you can have but little hope of making the most of life. You must learn to say "no" to the lawless claims of appetite and passion, or else they will become the tyrants of your soul, and crush you down to wretchedness and ruin.

Alas, how many for the want of self-government have been carried away by the whirl of fashion and sunk down in the vortex of extravagance! How many, for the want of learning to

submit to lawful authority, have chafed and fretted under the strokes of divine Providence, to the undoing of both body and soul? They would not bend, and were broken. Submission to our lot becomes us, if we would be equal to our day and trial.

And here, perhaps, as well as elsewhere, may come in the subject of the government of the tongue. The apostle James, says an eminent divine, compassed the entire circle of Christian doctrine and practice, giving it to us in five short chapters. Of these, near an entire chapter is devoted to the tongue, its use and abuse. Unsanctified, it is a world of iniquity. It possesses striking resemblances to prominent objects in the animate and inanimate kingdoms. It is a fire; not such as warms our hearths, cooks our food and drives our factories, but a wasting and devastating fire, conveying misery in its track and leaving blackness behind. How intense is the pain which fire produces, and with what ugly scars and contortions the wound heals. The wounds made by detraction are as deep, pain the victims more, and leave as unsightly scars as does fire upon the body.

The mouth is an arsenal, and the tongue combines in itself all the weapons of war. Sarcasm is the cold and glittering bayonet of satire, the sword cutting every way; anger is the bomb-shell, bursting when we are the least prepared; slander the cannon, throwing red-hot shot, which not only

demolish, but burn up the fragments. It sets on fire the wheels of nature, and the first wheel in the course is the man himself; and if that was all, we might look on with complacency, and see him burn; but the fire of an angry tone is not confined to its owner.

All manner of living creatures have been tamed. Lions have been harnessed and used to draw triumphal chariots. The Chinese educate the cormorant to fish for them, taking only such portions of the fish as the master chooses. And snakes are made to do the bidding of the charmer. Even the zebra, long held by naturalists to be untamable, has become docile under Rarey's hand, proving the word of God correct, against the statement of men. But the tongue can no man tame.

The vessel may start out upon an errand of peace, but in crossing the ocean, is sure to meet storms which will thoroughly test her strength. If, then, the helm be unmanageable, the waves soon engulf her. The man is the vessel, the tongue the helm, and the life the voyage. How shall this unworthy member be directed into worthy channels and its boundless powers be wholly consecrated to useful ends? Manifestly, only by accepting the aid, guidance and control of Christ. With His aid, we can control the tongue, offend not in word, and be the perfect man of whom the apostle speaks.

IV. Youth is important as the season of forming friendships and associations. "Intercourse with men of worth," says Lord Kames, "histories of generous and disinterested actions, and frequent meditations upon them, keep the sympathetic emotion in constant exercise, which, by degrees, produces a habit and confirms the authority of virtue." In respect to education, what a spacious and commodious avenue to the heart is here opened.

A man is known by the company he keeps. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." "He that walketh with the wise, will become yet wiser; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Character is a sacred thing. Labor to preserve it unspotted. If you would have pure varieties of grain, you must raise them apart; else, in the season of blossom, they will so mix the dust of their flowers as to destroy the purity of the variety. So, especially of youth, the blossom of life. Associations then formed, affect the character ever afterwards, to a greater or less degree: sometimes, alas, to its utter ruin. Beware, then, O youth, of evil associations. To use a homely illustration, if you plant your melons and gourds together, your gourds will not be benefitted, but your melons are ruined. Youth is also the season in which habits are formed. Your position is like one of nature's fortresses, capable of strong defence, and now very much in your own possession.

Evil habits have not, as yet, secured that strong position which long indulgence imparts. They may now be denied admittance, or more easily thrust out. You now hold the key to this fortress. You may open wide the entrance and permit evil habits to entrench themselves in the very heart of your citadel, or you may keep the door barred against them. Your position is important. If you allow them to dwell with you now, they will not hereafter depart at your bidding. They will hang upon you like so many blood-leeches, which you can neither satisfy nor shake off. They will become your tormenters and continually afflict you. Guard well, then, your fortress against the entrance of bad habits — habits of idleness, of dissipation, recklessness and prodigality. Guard against the formation of artificial appetites, for strong drink or even tobacco. The last, I know, is usually considered harmless; but I fear it is often like a spy in the camp, ready to show the whole force of the enemy the way of obtaining complete possession. One young man I knew, the son of respectable parents, who indulged in the use of tobacco; at first moderately, then excessively, then resorted to opium and brandy. He was a student of medicine, attended one course of lectures, took a spree at the close of the session, reached home a few days after in very feeble health, the powers of nature almost exhausted, and died the next day.

And now, O ingenuous youth, what need I say more to prove the importance of the position you occupy? You see it in the fact that it is life's seed-time — its forming period. You see it in the fact that the eyes of all are turned with interest upon you; the eyes of parents, the eyes of all who take an interest in education; the eyes of the State, the eyes of the Church, the eyes of the world. You see it in the fact that it is the season in which associations are formed, affecting your character for good or evil ever afterward. You see it in the fact that you are now forming habits that are to be as lasting in their effects as life. I know it may be said that habits may be changed, and so they may, and yet the influence of the first is not entirely destroyed.

There is an eastern story of a mother who made her son drive a nail in his room for every bad action of which he was guilty, and permitted him to draw one out for every good action he performed. Things went on badly and his room was, in process of time, full of driven nails; at length, he was led to reform, and after a long time announced to his mother that every nail had been extracted. "It is well, my son," said she, "but remember the prints are there still." If you form bad habits and break off from them all, you may carry their scars to the grave. Beware, then, of evil habits. Remember, youth is a very important season. "Remember, therefore, thy Creator in

the days of thy youth" "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all else shall be added unto you." "In all thy ways acknowledge God, and He shall direct thy steps." Remember, O young man, the importance of wisely employing thy strength. Listen to the words of wisdom. Young woman, be not giddy and vain, but thoughtful and sober. Young man, be sober-minded. Wilt thou not from this time cry unto God, and beseech Him to be the Guide of thy youth?

II.

Prov. xix : 2—"That the soul be without knowledge is not good."

Prov. ix : 10—"For the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding."

Psalms cxix : 9—"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy word."

2 Tim. iii : 15–17—"And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make the wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

THE first of these passages teaches that knowledge is necessary to the well being of the soul. The sentiment that ignorance is the mother of devotion, finds no support in the Word of God. It may pass current with those who make no distinction between degrading and driveling superstition and elevating godliness, but will at once be nailed to the counter, as base counterfeit, by every enlightened and genuine Christian.

Man is a complex being embracing animated nature and immaterial spirit. Without food for the body, suited to its nature, it must fail of vigorous expansion. Even if life be continued, it will be feeble in its exercises and dwarfish in its form;

"Feed me with food convenient for me," is a prayer suited to humanity, embracing as it does both body and spirit.

The text relates specially to the soul, the basis of all intellectual and spiritual culture. It is not good for the intellect to remain uncultivated. It should not lie a barren waste or be suffered to produce naught but worthless fruit. Man should know more than the brutes which perish. He should excel in the arts of life, and in understanding of the facts and principles pertaining to nature. He should shew himself a rational intelligence; but above and beyond this, he should be acquainted with his special and peculiar relation to the government of his Creator. He should understand his moral relation; whence he is, what he is, and whither he is going. He is not a leaf, dropped upon life's ocean to be whirled about by its currents or tossed idly upon its billows, the sport of every wave and the plaything of every breeze. He should understand that he has a part to act in life, energies to put forth, and a destiny to work out. There is a price put into his hands, talents given, which it becomes him to employ wisely and diligently. Nor should he be satisfied with mere theory. In God, he should practically recognize a wise and gracious Father; in Jesus Christ, a present and blessed Savior; and in the Holy Spirit, an abiding Teacher, Sanctifier and Comforter. This indeed is the great desideratum, "This is life eter-

nal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." Compared with this, all other knowledge is empty and vain. What is science? What is art? They are attainments pertaining to time; but the knowledge of which we speak, reaches to eternity. It is a knowledge, special and peculiar, affecting the character and relative position of the soul. Destitute of this, the soul is in darkness, without hope and without God in the world. With it, the soul is enabled to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ.

But what this knowledge is, we find more particularly described in our second quotation. "For the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding." Fear, here, implies reverence or sacred regard: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of His saints, and to be had in reverence by all that are round about Him." I once heard an old divine remark that it seemed to him there were some persons destitute of any religious sense. They seemed utterly unable to discern things sacred as differing from things common, to distinguish between the house of God and a tavern, a sermon and a political harangue, the Sabbath and other days, the Bible and a book of travels. Such have no fear of God before their eyes. They are in this respect brutish, having no knowledge of the Holy. The Holy One is God, and the great

matter is that we know Him as the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify Him accordingly.

"The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever." There is in it nothing corrupting or degrading, and the more it is exercised the more purifying and elevating does it become. The fear of man bringeth a snare, tends to chill noble aspirations and cramp the manly energies of the free born spirit. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It opens fields of knowledge in which the noblest energies of the soul may expand and be strengthened. Without reverence or sacred regard to God, man sinks into sottish ignorance. He is stupid and brutish. Without knowledge of the Holy, man is without understanding, destitute of moral discernment, and like a body without life, rapidly tending to decay. The fear of the Lord implies the service of the Lord. In short, it characterizes the distinction between the godly and the wicked. My young friends, be ye in the fear of the Lord all the day long. Sanctify the Lord in your heart, and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. His word declares—"Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

But where is the well of knowledge and the flowing spring of understanding? Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? The inspired answer is, "by taking heed thereto according to

Thy word." My young friends, it behooves you to consider your ways, your habits of thought, feeling, words, and actions. You are capable of reflection and comparison. You can take your conduct and measure it by the Word of God. You are capable of marking the agreement or difference. Thus, may you become familiar with those high and holy principles, which are so enlightening, purifying, and strengthening. The Word of God is the great fountain of knowledge. It opens to man more of his own history, external and internal, than any other, or even all other, books. It solves the mystery of his existence, carries him back to contemplate the perfect original, the first link of the race, points out the time, cause and nature of his fall and ruin, and opens up the way of his recovery. The principles it inculcates are more extensive, broader, higher, deeper and of more universal adaptation than can be found any where else. The world by wisdom knew not God. Sages, the most profound and earnest, were all at fault; their most brilliant descriptions dazzled but to blind. The Word of God has deeper philosophy, and more instructive history, than any other volume. It presents stronger and higher motives to allure to goodness, and more powerful and cogent reasons to deter from evil, than any other. No book lays such deep and broad foundation for all that is pure and holy; none exhibit so awfully the bottomless pit open to swallow up the

workers of iniquity. Nowhere are there such gracious promises to encourage the earnest seeker after good; nowhere are there found such terrible threatenings against the evil doer.

But when should this book be studied? We answer, from childhood—"And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures." Such was the Apostle Paul's commendation to Timothy his beloved son in the faith. Perhaps the same may be said of some of you, my young friends. Perhaps a mother's voice instilled into your young hearts many a precious Scripture truth. Ah! there may be here, those who received the Bible as a mother's precious gift—whose hand, now cold in death, there penned the son's or daughter's name. It is to you a parent's gift, a parent's legacy—

"A parent's blessing on her child,
Goes with the Holy thing;
The love that would retain the one,
Must to the other cling—
Remember 'tis no common toy,
A mother's gift, remember girl, remember boy."

But what is the character of that wisdom which it imparts? It is able to make thee wise unto salvation. It teaches of Jesus Christ who came into this world to save sinners, and Christ is the great channel through which salvation's blessings flow. He is the way and the truth and the life. It is able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. But whence

cometh this wisdom? "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." What is its use? "It is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." To what extent? To the fullest measure—"that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

My young friends, your souls need knowledge for their good, that knowledge which concerns your relation to God. You need knowledge of the Holy—need it for the cleansing of your way—need it in your youth. It is found in the Bible and is available to the full extent of all your necessities. Like the manna to the Israelites in the wilderness, it is food from heaven. It offers nourishment to your spirit, enough for one—enough for all—enough for evermore. It is like a great spring in the desert. Generation after generation have drunk of its refreshing waters, and still there is no abatement. It is like the sun in the heavens. Wherever it goes, there light and blessing penetrate the heart of society. Ages after ages have received of its light with joy and gladness, and still its brightness remains undimmed and undiminished.

But why press the Bible upon the attention of the young? Because they occupy a position upon which it is able to confer the largest benefits. It offers blessings inestimable to all; but the aged cannot hope in this world to share them so long.

Their sands are too near run out; with them, at best, it is evening-tide. It may shed lustre and brightness upon the closing day of life; but cannot blot from their history the morning and noon of gloom. It may be to the aged as the rainbow in the evening, showing that the storm is past, and give hope of a happy dawn beyond the night of death: but if the young take hold of the word of life and bind it to their hearts, then shall their sun be bright in the morning and all their day be light. Then shall their path be as that of the just, which is as the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day. With you, my young friends, the day of life is just begun, and if you now take God's word as a light to your feet and a lamp to your path, you will have its gracious aid in all your journey.

Another reason for commending the Scriptures especially to the young, is found in the fact that they contain special invitations addressed to those in the morning of their days. "Those that seek me early shall find me." "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth." "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Here are invitations, admonitions and promises, specially applicable to

the young. They are words of gracious encouragement to life's early days. It is a Father's voice calling tenderly in life's most impressive hour.

Again, youth especially need the instruction of infallible wisdom. It is a season of peculiar danger. They are but little experienced in the ways of the world, and therefore more liable to be led astray by its allurements. They see the light from pleasure's lantern; but they know not that it is an *ignis fatuus*, and that to follow it, is to wander among quagmires and over dreary bogs, and still to find the phantom light ever receding. Here in God's word my young friends, is a surer light, "whereunto ye do well to take heed, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts."

Youth, moreover, are more liable to be carried away by passion. Their passions are more easily excited, and they are more ready to follow their dictates. My youthful friends, God's word is a better guide. It teaches you "that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, you should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world."

Youth, too, is a pliable age. They have scarcely learned to say no, even when conscience hesitates. They are easily persuaded, and led astray. Dear youth, hear the warnings of heavenly wisdom, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."

Avoid the appearance of evil. Beware of the first steps in the path of vice. You would not launch your bark upon the rapids of St. Lawrence, because of its swiftly gliding current, for you know you could not escape the cataract. Consider the tendencies of vain amusement, and dare to say to the tempter who entices you to venture upon the enchanted ground—No.

Again: the Bible is the more earnestly pressed upon your attention, because, with the blessing of God, you may more easily conform to its precepts.

"'Tis easy work if we begin,
To fear the Lord betimes;
While sinners who grow old in sin,
Are hardened in their crimes.

'Twill save us from a thousand snares,
To mind religion young;
Grace will preserve our following years,
And make our virtues strong."

Evil habits have not become so firmly fixed. The aged tree has received its form, and that which is crooked cannot be made straight. The growing scion may be easily bent, and by proper treatment become straight and beautifully symmetrical. Would you become trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord? Let the Word of God dwell in you richly. "Through thy precepts, I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way."

A further reason for commending the Bible to the young, is the many illustrious examples there portrayed. It is an old adage that example speaks louder than precept. Here is indeed a great portrait gallery; not indeed of forms and faces, but of character. Here are portrayed the lineaments of the godly man by limners taught by the Spirit of God.

What a model of faith, have we in Abraham? At the command of God we see him leaving country and kindred, not knowing whither he was going, only that he was following divine direction. Again, we see him preparing to sacrifice the dearest earthly object of his affection, because God so commanded him. His will was to obey God, feeling assured that in so doing all would be well. How marked was his forbearance and courtesy towards his nephew Lot, when a strife arose between their herdmen: "Let there be no strife between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen: if thou wilt take the right, then I will go to the left; or if thou wilt go to the left, then I will take the right. We are brethren." How dignified his deportment before the sons of Heth, when he sought a place among them to bury his dead. And of his wife Sarah, the Apostle Peter assigns to her the honored place of mother to those who do well—"whose daughters ye are as long as ye do well."

What an example of filial affection, do we see in Joseph? The child of a peculiarly beloved mother, he was in early life sold as a bond-servant to a strange people. Then he is falsely accused of an infamous design, and thrown into prison, and remains there for years; but is eventually brought out and made ruler over the land of Egypt. In process of time, he sends for his father and family, and nourishes them in a time of famine. Joseph is indeed a model of virtue inflexible—of fortitude unfaltering—of wisdom pure and peaceable. In every situation of his varied career we see an example worthy of the highest admiration and of earnest imitation.

And what shall we say of Moses—the sublime poet and unsurpassed Legislator—the man so wonderfully distinguished, and yet so meek? How wonderful his history? An infant committed to a frail bark upon the Nile, exposed to the monsters of the river, that may rush from their oozy bed to destroy him, he is preserved and taken by the daughter of the king, and adopted as her own son. There he is educated among princes, but constrained at length to fly for his life, he becomes a shepherd, and for forty years is inured to labor. Then he is called back to be the leader of the thousands of Israel in their exodus from the land of Egypt to the land of Canaan. At last, his work accomplished, he is led to the top of Pisgah, and there, after feasting his eyes with a view of

the earthly Canaan, he breathes out his life, and his spirit ascends to glory. What a wonderful history? No production of the imagination of any earthly genius can compare with the story of the life of Moses. And here we might speak of his sister Miriam, who led the daughters of Israel in songs of praise to God for His wonderful deliverance of her people. And there too is Joshua, the valiant, the captain of the Lord's Host, in the conquest of the land which God gave them. His last recorded public act was the engaging his people to renew their covenant engagement to be the Lord's. He was indeed ever valiant in a good cause. And there is Caleb, the steadfast, who among many faithless was still faithful found; ever wholly following the Lord his God. There too we find the beautiful Ruth, leaving her country and people to go with her mother in-law to put her trust in the God of Israel. There too we find Deborah, courageous, and skilled in matters of warfare above her sex, and ready to go forth with the armed legions to secure the deliverance of her people. She was a mother in Israel and forty years the judge of her nation.

And there is Hannah, so earnest in prayer that she seemed as one intoxicated, and was heard in her petition. She gave her son to the Lord, who became a Prophet most eminent for his devotion to God and the welfare of his people. And there is David, the son of Jesse, in his boyhood keeping

his father's flock, and in the strength of the Lord snatching the prey out of the mouth of the lion and the paw of the bear, slaying them both; becoming thus prepared in the same strength to meet, fearlessly and undaunted, the giant Goliah, and wipe away reproach from the armies of Israel. David, the sweet singer of Israel, skillful upon the harp which he delighted to tune to the praise of the Lord. David, who loved the house of the Lord and composed many psalms suited for use in the solemn service of the sanctuary. And there is Abigail, of a good countenance and excellent understanding. By her address and generosity, she turned away threatened destruction to her husband for his churlishness, and paved the way for her future royal alliance. And there is Jonathan the friend of David, a friend loving at all times and sticking closer than a brother. "Oh Jonathan," said the surviving David, "very pleasant hast thou been unto me. Thy love to me was wonderful, surpassing the love of women." And there is Hadassah or Esther, in the wonderful providence of God; raised to be Queen of the vast Medo-Persian empire; yet, in view of the danger of her kindred, after days of fasting and prayer, venturing at the risk of her life into the presence of the King, and obtaining her request for their preservation.

And there is Isaiah, the evangelical and profound. Though deep, yet clear. Jeremiah, patri-

otic yet tender and faithful. Ezekiel, terrible in his conceptions, and yet fascinating in his address, as one having a pleasant voice and that could play well upon an instrument. And there is Daniel, true to his godly principles, not to be tempted by dainty fare, from the simplicity of temperance, or deterred by terrible threatenings from the regu larity of his devotions. In adversity, we behold him calm and reliant; in prosperity, bearing himself with becoming majesty, far removed both from the haughtiness of the proud and the sycophancy of the mean. Daniel, a model of diligence, faithfulness, temperance and piety in the sight of God and man. Daniel, presenting in his history one of the finest specimens of the man, gentleman and Christian. We commend the study of his character to your earnest attention.

And the time would fail us to go over the list of minor prophets, and less prominent individuals of the Old Testament record. And as to the New Testament, what can we more than glance at the ardent, honest intrepid Peter; the gentle, loving, devoted John; the unflinching, inflexible, indefatigable, faithful, fearless, earnest Paul; the youthful Timothy, nursed in the lap of piety, and from a child knowing the Scriptures which are able to make wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. And there is Stephen, the protomartyr, dying like a valiant soldier at his post, dauntless, courageous, and yet forgiving even in death. And there, too,

is Apollos, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures. There, too, we read of Mary, the mother of our Lord, whose soul magnified the Lord, and whose spirit rejoiced in God her Savior. Of Anna, also, although four-score and four years old, yet she departed not from the Temple, but with fasting and prayer, served God night and day. There, too, we read of Mary, the sister of Lazarus, who anointed the feet of the Savior, and of whom the blessed commendation was, "she hath done what she could." And again, we find her sitting at Jesus' feet and listening to His word. Her adorning was not indeed that outward adorning of "plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold and of putting on of apparel; but the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God "of great price." Of her, the Savior said, "Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken from her."

Here, too, we find Lydia whose heart the Lord opened while she attended where prayer was wont to be made, and who opened her house to the Lord's servants, and constrained them to partake of her hospitality. There are also mentioned the women who followed Jesus, and ministered to Him of their substance, and whose skillful hands, perhaps, made for Him that seamless coat, emblematical of His perfect righteousness, arrayed in which, the penitent believer obtains acceptance as

justified in the sight of God. There, too, we read of the women which came with Him from Gallilee, following after and beholding the sepulchre, and how the body was laid, and returning to the place of their sojourn, to prepare spices and ointments for embalming it. Kind hearts whose love could not cease from doing, so long as any thing remained to be performed. There, too, we read of Dorcas, who was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. An angel of mercy seeking out the destitute, and supplying them according to her ability and their need. Such are a few of the many characters brought to notice in the Word of God, whose faith we are exhorted to follow, considering the end of their conversation.

There is one character delineated in the Scriptures of the New Testament which we must not pass unnoticed; but which it becomes us to contemplate with holy reverence and godly fear. It is that of the God-man, Jesus Christ our Blessed Savior. It is drawn by the pencil of the Holy Spirit, and presents humanity in absolute perfection. Grace was poured upon His lips—He was born without sin—He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. As He grew in stature, He grew in favor both with God and man. There was no guile found in His mouth—He went about doing good—His life was virtue in action. In His public exercises and in his private intercourse, one great aim stands forth ever prominent:

"I must work the works of Him that sent Me; I seek not Mine own glory, but the glory of the Father."

The wickedness of the wicked, of the hypocrite, of the formalists, even in high places, He hesitated not to reprove with plainness and becoming severity. The humbler applicant for instruction or healing, He met with kindness and compassion, and never refused to impart the needed benefit. At last, He was betrayed, and condemned to be crucified; yet upon His trial, no witnesses could be found to agree in supporting the counts of His indictment. "I find no fault in this man," said Pilate, the Roman Governor, "no, nor yet Herod; for I sent you to him, and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto Him." Yet was He led away to be crucified, and in the hour of His anguish, His prayer went forth for His murderers, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

But, perhaps, I cannot better set forth this part of my subject, than by asking your attention to the often quoted infidel testimony of the Philosopher Rousseau. "I will confess to you," says he, "that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel has its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers, with all their pomp of diction, how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the Scriptures? Is it possible that a book at once so simple and so sublime, should be

merely the work of a man? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains, should be Himself a mere man? Do we find that He assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in His manner? What an affecting gracefulness in His delivery? What sublimity in His maxims? What profound wisdom in His discourses? What presence of mind, what subtlety, what truth in His replies? How great the command over His passions? Where is the man, where the philosopher who could so live and so die; without weakness and without ostentation? When Plato describes his imaginary good man, loaded with all the punishments of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he describes exactly the character of Jesus Christ; the resemblance was so striking that all the fathers perceived it. What prepossession, what blindness must it be, to compare the son of Sophroniscus to the son of Mary? What an infinite disproportion there is between them. Socrates, dying without pain or ignominy, easily supported his character to the last; and if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was any thing more than a mere sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them into practice: he had only to say, therefore, what they had done, and to reduce

their examples to precepts. Aristides had been just before Socrates defined justice. Leonidas had given up his life for his country, before Socrates declared patriotism to be a duty. The Spartans were a sober people, before Socrates recommended sobriety. Before he had even defined virtue, Greece abounded in virtuous men. But where could Jesus learn, among His contemporaries, that pure and sublime morality, of which He only has given us both precept and example? The greatest wisdom was made known among the most bigoted fanaticism, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues did honor to the vilest on earth. The death of Socrates, peacefully philosophising among friends, appears the most agreeable that one could wish: that of Jesus, expiring in agonies, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that one could fear. Socrates indeed, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus amidst excruciating tortures, prayed for His merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God. Shall we suppose the evangelical history a mere fiction? Indeed my friends it bears no marks of fiction. On the contrary, the history of Socrates, which no one presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition in fact only shifts the difficulty without obviating it; it is

more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality, contained in the Gospel; the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the Hero."

But in reference to the divine authority of the Bible, our space will allow us, at present, to say little. There are few in this country who have the hardihood to dispute it. It is true there have been those who have forsaken this fountain of living waters, and gone about to hew to themselves cisterns; but they have found them broken cisterns that could hold no water. None who deny the inspiration of the Bible ever had the impudence to present a book they could claim to be better; neither have they been vain enough to contend that they had attained to a purer morality than it inculcates. The Bible stands alone in unapproachable excellence, and hence we deduce an argument that its authorship belongs unto Him whose face no mortal man can look upon and live. The existence of the world proves a God, because nothing less is adequate to the effect. In like manner, the government of the world proves a God, because nothing less is adequate to exercise the power and wisdom thus exhibited. The Bible proves the existence of a God, because nothing

less is adequate to the production of such a volume; hence there must be a God, and none other can be the author of this book.

Moreover, if we take the opposers of its divine authority as a class, we shall be constrained to say their character accounts for their opposition. With them, no doubt, the wish is father to the thought. "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God"—observe, "in his heart," he said or wished there were none: so of those who say that there is no inspired word or holy Scriptures. On the other hand, the godly everywhere rejoice to hail it as a book divine. They esteem all its precepts concerning all things to be right; therefore, they hate every false way. They love that which is good, and they find the Bible a great treasury of precious truth where they are furnished for every good word and work: a great arsenal, where is laid up in store armor wherewith they are fortified against evil and strengthened for that which is good.

As evidence that the Bible is from God, we might speak of the purity of its doctrines. Surely, said the officers sent to take Jesus, to the caviling chief Priests and Scribes, "Never man spake like this man": and so we may wonder at the gracious words here recorded, and in turn exclaim, 'never book spake like this book.' We might speak of the miracles wrought and recorded in attestation

of the truth of its claims. "We know," said Nicodemus to Jesus, "that Thou art a Teacher come from God, for no man can do the miracles which Thou doest except God be with him." So may we say of the Bible, 'we know that it is a book come from God, for no book could have such miracles to attest its truth, except it were divinely authorized.'

We might point to prophecies, long fulfilled and still fulfilling, as no doubtful testimony that the book, containing them as a component part of its contents, must have been the production of one who knew the end from the beginning; and the possessor of such knowledge must be God. Again: we might point to the blessed effects produced upon society wherever the Bible is circulated. The domestic, civil and moral institutions of such a country immediately take a higher and better position. Everywhere, in its course, light and blessing flow.

But we ask attention for a short time to the sublimity of its style, and the worthy manner in which it speaks of the Most High, as compared with the most brilliant of earthly geniuses. Let us take an example in this direction from Homer, the Prince of ancient poets.

"The saffron-colored morning was spread over the whole earth; when Jupiter, rejoicing in his thunder, held an assembly of the gods on the highest top of the many-headed Olympus. He

himself made a speech to them, and all the gods listened. 'Hear me, all ye gods, and all ye goddesses, that I may say what my soul in my breast commands. Let not therefore any female deity, or any male, endeavor to break through my words, but all consent together, that I may most quickly perform these works. Whomsoever, therefore, of the gods I shall understand to have gone by himself, and of his own accord, to give assistance either to the Trojans or the Greeks, he shall return to Olympus shamefully wounded; or I will throw him, seized by me, into dark hell, very far off, where the most deep abyss is under the earth; where there are iron gates, and a brazen threshold, as far within hell, as heaven is distant from the earth. He will then know, by how much I am the most powerful of all the gods.

'But come, try, O ye gods, that ye may all see. Hang down the golden chain from heaven, hang upon it all ye gods, and all ye goddesses; but ye shall not be able to draw from heaven to the ground Jupiter, the great counselor, though ye strive ever so much. But when I afterwards shall be willing to draw, I shall lift both the earth itself and the sea itself. Then I shall bind the chain round the top of Olympus, and they shall all hang aloft. For so much am I above gods and above men.'"

Contrast this masterly passage, written by one who probably had the greatest advantages of any mortal for perfecting a genius, with the following

passages from the writings of one brought up as a shepherd and in a country where learning was little cultivated.

"O Lord, my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty; who coverest thyself with light as with a garment; who stretchest out the heavens like a canopy, who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters; who maketh the clouds his chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind, who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire. Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever. Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

"O Lord, how manifold are thy works? In wisdom hast thou made them all. The earth is full of thy riches, so is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping, innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships. There is that Leviathan whom thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them, they gather. Thou openest thy hand; they are filled with good.

Thou hidest thy face; they are troubled. Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit; they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth. The glory of the Lord shall endure forever. The Lord shall rejoice in his works. He looketh on the earth and it trembleth. He toucheth the hills, and they smoke. I will sing to the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise unto my God, while I have my being."

What is the description of Homer to David? As far as the heavens are above the earth, so far do the thoughts of the latter rise above those of the former. The one is genius earth-born and earth-bound; the other is inspiration from heaven.

But upon this part of the subject I need not dwell. You have been trained up to receive the Scriptures as the Word of God. "King Agrippa," said the Apostle Paul, before that high presence, "believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." With good reason may I conclude the same of you who now hear me. Let it then be the lamp to your feet and the light to your path. Bind its precepts about your neck; write them upon the table of your heart. The Bible is indeed a safe guide. Well indeed are they guided who are led by the Word and Spirit of God. Many have perished from life; but none ever sunk down into eternal death until their backs were turned to the teachings of the Bible.

"O then, study this Book,
Whose author is God Himself,
Whose subject God, and man, salvation, life,
And death, eternal life, eternal death.
Dread words, whose meaning has no end, no bounds:
Most wondrous book, bright candle of the Lord,
Star of eternity; the only star
By which the bark of man can navigate
The sea of life and gain the coast of bliss securely."

Dear youth, you are launched upon the ocean of life. Some of you perhaps will think that you are gliding safely over its waters; and in an hour, when dreading no danger, will strike upon the shoal of self-deception, and find, when too late, you are stranded and lost. He that trusts in his own heart, says the word of inspiration, is a fool.

Others, perhaps, will encounter many a storm and tempest: Will throw much, which you now highly value, overboard, as endangering your safety; but at last, with battered hulk, and sails all tattered and torn, will reach the desired haven.

Others still, it may be, will come into port with sails all spread like some stately bark richly freighted from a favored land. But all this is to me unknown. I may contemplate you as already afloat on the tide of time, and about to sail to a distant shore. You appear to my vision like a beautiful fleet, gaily painted, with streamers bright floating in the breeze. Each bark is richly freighted; for every one has his all on board. The parting has been taken, the anchor weighed,

the sails spread, and proudly now with well-filled canvas, all are standing out to sea. I ask where bound? The answer, "No one knows," falls sadly on my ear. Any chart or compass aboard? "No one knows." Any Pilot to steer the ship? "No one knows."

"Bound on a voyage of awful length.
And danger little known;
A stranger to superior strength,
Man vainly trusts his own.

But oars alone can ne'er prevail
To reach the distant coast;
The breath of heaven must swell the sail,
Or all the toil is lost."

My young friends, have you a Bible of your own, and do you read it daily? One of the marks of the happy, as described by the pen of inspiration, is "they meditate upon the law of God day and night."

Parents, have all your children that can read, a Bible? They ought to have it, with your example and counsel to read it earnestly and prayerfully. It is heaven's precious gift to men. See that ye do not undervalue it.

Dear youth, there is a blessed haven: will you not shape your course for it? Here is the blessed chart that marks out the way: will you not take it, and make it your constant study? There is a skillful Pilot who has never lost a vessel. He offers you His services. It is Jesus. O commit yourselves to His guidance, and all shall be well.

III.

2 Sam. xviii: 32—"Is the young man Absalom safe?"

Prov. vii: 6, 7—"For at the window of my house I looked through my casement, and beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding."

1 Tim. v: 6—"But she that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth."

Eccl. xi: 9—"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

Heb. xi: 24-26—"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."

IN these passages we are taught that snares and dangers are about the pathway of the young. They may therefore well be the subjects of anxious inquiry to all who feel a deep interest in their welfare. Their safety for time and eternity cannot be too highly valued, or too eagerly sought. The interests involved outweigh all the treasures of earth. What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul.

Is the young man Absalom safe?

These are the words of parental anxiety in relation to a beloved son. Absalom, the son of David, king of Israel, was a young man of great personal attractions. In all the land, there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty, from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. He was probably vain of his beauty and proud of his parts, fond of personal display and gay attire; but criminally neglectful of the cultivation of his mind and morals. His attainments were those of the courtier rather than those of the statesman. He sought to secure his aims by the arts of flattery or by inspiring dread of his rashness, rather than by solid worth of character and deeds of noble generosity. He had, in all probability, been a spoiled and petted child, for, like such in general, he manifested a wayward disposition, and an ungovernable temper. For a wicked deed done by his brother, he slew him, by the hand of his servants, under cover of the rites of hospitality. Because Joab, the Captain of the forces of Israel, delayed to comply with his request, he commanded his servants to set fire to his property and burn up his corn. Artful, unprincipled, and aspiring, he undertook with Satanic subtlety to dethrone his own father, and seize with his own hand the reins of government. His was vaulting ambition that held nothing sacred which stood in the way of its gratification.

We are told of Lucius Cataline, who headed a conspiracy to overturn the government of his country, that he possessed every talent of a great man but integrity and virtue. So it was perhaps with Absalom. The result however was fatal to his prospects and ended in his death.

The father of this ungrateful son had been anxious to preserve his life, hoping no doubt he might yet see the error of his way and obtain mercy before he should be called to judgment.

Who can bound a parent's love? Floods of ingratitude cannot quench it. It will hope while there is life, and hope on and hope ever.

But God is pleased even on earth to vindicate His own law. To the nation of Israel it had been proclaimed in solemn assembly by divine appointment, "Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or mother, and all the people shall say amen." Unnatural conduct, so atrocious as that of Absalom, God was pleased to visit with fearful destruction. He would make it a beacon whose fearful glare, streaming over life's surging waves, from century to century, should make manifest the rock upon which this youth of royal birth so untimely perished. And still above the contending elements, the voice comes in tones, solemn and strong, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" Is the young man—is the young woman safe? Is my child safe? may every parent anxiously ask. Is he safe in regard to his principles? Is there light within to

discover to him the safe path? Has he the chart, and does he understand it so as to find the course over life's rough sea to the haven of rest? Are the young safe—are their companions persons of virtuous character—uncorrupted, honest and honorable?

Are our youth safe in regard to their habits, and are we sure the amusements in which they share tend to promote their well being here and hereafter?

Life is too precious to suffer its dewy morning to be employed in cultivating worthless weeds or opening sickly springs. Conscience, duty, love, all demand that youth be pointed, led, allured to the fountain of living waters. Humanity and religion both cry out and bid us urge upon them to sow good seed that the harvest may be to praise and honor. God's word proclaims, "Be not deceived: God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

Are the young safe?

The inquiry may well be sounded forth from the domestic hearth, from the school, the pulpit, the halls of legislation, and from the courts of justice.

Are the young safe? They are in a world of temptation—they are sailing upon a dangerous sea—their path is beset with many snares, and yet,

it may be, they perceive not the danger. Like a poor bird in the charmed circle of the serpent, they know not that every round of sinful pleasure brings them nearer and nearer to utter destruction.

If, with the penetration of the wise man of old, we look from the high points of observation, we may still discover simple ones, and young men devoid of understanding. The particular vice here alluded to is one of a most painful character. In the language of inspiration, "its house is in the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. None that go there return again, neither take hold of the paths of life." It is a species of wickedness that cannot be detailed, but against which the Scriptures hold forth the most terrible warnings. It is sometimes overtaken even in this life with most fearful judgments. It degrades the rational nature—impairs the moral faculties—unfits for the enjoyments and duties of domestic life—destroys reputation, and is like a great millstone to sink the soul into the deepest hell. "How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity, and fools hate knowledge?" He that is wise, will shun the gate and abhor the road which leads to such utter and aggravated destruction.

"She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."

> "The pleasures that allure the sense,
> Are dangerous snares to souls;
> There's but a drop of flattering sweet,
> And dashed with bitter bowls."

A heart truly alive to God will have no use for the vain amusements of the world. It will not desire to cheapen and purchase the goods at Vanity Fair, for, knowing where infinitely more valuable commodities can be obtained, it cannot be tempted by vain show. So, on the other hand, the heart wedded to worldly vanities will find no attraction in spiritual exercises. Such are dead to God and holiness. As a body without life hastens to putrifaction, so a soul without the life of God tends to corruption and endless ruin. She that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth: though alive in body—living as liveth the brute in the gratification of animal appetite—yet dead in spirit—dead to all that elevates, purifies and beautifies the soul.

But are there no enjoyments accessible to the young? Must they move through life as if continually in a funeral procession? Not at all. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes, but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

Some have regarded this as severe irony—as though the idea was—go on, young man, in your wickedness and folly, and take the consequences if you choose—we have nothing more to say—we will let you alone for the judgment.

I do not think it is intended to hinder the young from cultivating cheerfulness of temper, or under

proper regulations from giving play to the buoyancy of his youthful heart. I think the meaning is, Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart and in the sight of thine eyes, but let all your enjoyments be regulated by a sense of your accountability unto God. This will restrain you from excess, and tend to promote your best interests both here and hereafter. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart and put away evil from thy flesh—that is abstain from all hurtful indulgences, hold your youthful passions under lawful control—for childhood and youth are poor guides—nay, they are vanity.

In the history of Moses, we have a remarkable example of one who, clearly perceiving the dangers of his situation, earnestly resisted them all, and gave his life to the service of his Creator and his people. He might indeed in childhood have been affected by the pomp and circumstance of royal association: may have felt a childish pleasure in the glitter of regal apparel: may have taken delight in the sumptuous fare, and the costly toys lavishly bestowed upon him. If so, however, it was but a boyish weakness. When he came to years, and in the maturity of his mind contemplated the scene, its charms all vanished. His birth, he knew, was through a godly ancestry, and although circumstances had brought him into favor with a royal Princess who was ready to confer upon him

all the emoluments a child could claim, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and turned to his true parentage. To him, the covenanted blessings of God's people were more precious than all the honors and wealth of Egypt's crown. Earthly pleasures he knew were but for a season. The fashion of the world passeth away. He preferred even present affliction with God's people, rather than to enjoy the short-lived pleasures of sin. Reproach for Christ was more valued by him than all the treasúres of Egypt. He was one of the few who have preferred even in youth to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, rather than to divide the spoil with the proud—preferred the condition of a child of poor and pious parents, to the condition of the son and heir of royalty—preferred a lowly dwelling and hard fare with the pious, rather than a palace and costly viands with the wicked—preferred a life of exile—to be a stranger in a strange land, rather than to give countenance to the oppression of his people—preferred affliction in the ways of piety, to pleasure in the ways of sin—preferred reproach in the ways of religion, to honor and riches in the way of the ungodly.

These passages of Scripture teach that all youth are not in the way of safety.

The young man Absalom was not safe. He was probably raised very much in idleness. This indeed is very unsafe.

"Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do."

A steady, useful employment is of great advantage and importance to the young. They should be trained to it. The history of man as furnished by Scripture is instructive in this particular. To Adam in Paradise it was given to dress and keep the garden. There is no genuine happiness in idleness. Since the Fall, man is sentenced to eat bread by the sweat of his face. It is no doubt best that it should be so. Best for body and mind—best physically, intellectually, and morally. The condition of men throughout the world proves it. Those who are employed in steady, useful labor are far in advance of the indolent feeders upon the earth's spontaneous productions. If we look at home, upon our own population, we find that idleness is the parent of many and most ruinous vices. Hence our cities and large towns become hotbeds of iniquity. The youth become steeped in crime before the attainment of manhood. The growth is rapid and downward. These in due time form a corps of gamblers, loafers and drunkards, the pests of society, and the dregs of the community. Nor are such cases found alone in cities and villages. Many country neighborhoods have their idle young men. These in their turn often become inebriates, gamblers and spendthrifts, and sink down to an early and infamous grave. If such be the pestiferous fruits of idleness, surely it becomes those

who have the training of youth to see to it that they are trained to steady and useful employment, so that in future years they may be able to say,

"Thanks to my friends, who took care of my breeding,
Who taught me betimes to love working and reading."

You are not safe my young friends, if you are without useful employment. The ancients had a saying, "that while the devil tempts every other man, the idle man tempts the devil." God's word teaches us to be diligent in business. Again: it declares "If any man will not work neither let him eat." And yet again, there is a command "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work." He is not safe who eats the bread of idleness.

Moreover, habits of industry must be acquired by each one for himself. Another's labor may feed you, but it cannot make you industrious and useful. Character you must form for yourself. Be not a drone in the hive but a worker. Contribute your full share of labor of body or mind for the benefit of society. Then when you die it may be said in truth, that having served your generation by the will of God, you fell asleep.

As to mental improvement, you cannot value it too highly.

"The mind's the standard of the man."

"In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle,
Be a hero in the strife."

Mental improvement must be your own work. As soon might you expect another's eating and digesting food to give sustenance and vigor to your body, as that another's study should give discipline and strength to your mind. There is no royal road up the hill of science. He who would ascend its heights, breathe its invigorating air and view its extended landscape, whether prince or peasant, must patiently and perseveringly toil up the rugged steep. "A smooth sea never made a skillful mariner. Neither do uninterrupted prosperity and success qualify a man best for usefulness and happiness. The storms of adversity, like the storms of the ocean, arouse the faculties and excite the invention, prudence, skill and fortitude of the voyager." He that is always looking for easy places will not likely excel in any department. Beware of the habit of skipping hard words, difficult sentences, and intricate problems—grapple with difficulties, determined to overcome them.

Moral attainments, too, require labor. Through much tribulation must we enter the heavenly kingdom. If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small. Strive, said the great moral Teacher, to enter in at the strait gate. Labor for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life. There is no excellence without labor—without it there is no safety—guard then against idleness. "He that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster."

My next remark is that the prodigal is not safe. Prodigality may commence in the nursery. The parent who feeds his child on candies, and purchases expensive toys for its amusement, gratifying a morbid appetite, and nurturing a childish extravagance, is planting the seeds of prodigality. As he grows older, let his pocket be furnished with money for which he has bestowed no labor, and the evil principle will grow stronger. Such an one will be likely to grow up a spendthrift. His idea of the use of money has but little to do with necessity or utility. He rather regards it as a means of gratifying appetite, passion, or a vain desire for show. Such an one though he may do a generous action, will in all probability in principle be selfish. If he enter into business, it will be upon the neck or nothing principle. He is not prepared to secure a competence or wealth, by patient industry and prudnet economy. His preference is for large ventures and heavy speculations. Such an one sometimes becomes wealthy, but more frequently proves bankrupt, and involves many others in his ruin. The person whose expenditures are not characterized by a regard to necessity and utility is not safe. Beware of prodigality. Many a wife's patrimony has been squandered by the prodigality of her husband. Many a husband's hard earnings have been sunk by the extravagance of his wife. Labor always to keep your expenditures within the range of your income.

"Mr. Speaker—Mr. Speaker," said the eccentric John Randolph, from his place in the Senate, "I have found the Philosopher's stone which turns everything into gold. It is, 'pay as you go.'" A far greater oracle enjoins it upon us, in language equally concise and forcible saying, "Owe no man anything, but by love serve one another."

But there is also a mental prodigality, a wasteful expenditure of sensibility. The producer and devourer of novels belong to this class. Many there are that can be greatly interested, and weep or rejoice in a mere fiction, who find but little interest in that which is real. Their mental sensibilities are wasted. They live in an ideal world, and have but little sympathy with the true. Many a youth has thus become a mental spendthrift.

"Practical habits"—says Butler—"are formed and strengthened by repeated acts, while passive impressions grow weaker by being repeated upon us." Now, if the connection between sympathetic feeling and beneficent action be destroyed, the mind in this regard is but a watch that has lost both its hands, as useless when it goes as when it stands.

And there are, alas! spiritual spendthrifts. There is a price put into their hands to get wisdom, but they have no heart unto it. What to them are Bibles, and sermons, and Sabbaths, and sanctuaries, but so many means and occasions of spiritual prodigality. What are all the gifts, the talents,

the opportunities, conferred upon such by their heavenly Father, as means of life, but a coveted property to be abused and spent in riotous living? O cruel Prodigality—thou art the waster of fortunes—the plunderer of intellect—the bane of morals — the destroyer of souls! Beware, dear youth, of prodigality.

There is an opposite extreme, and that is parsimony. In youth, it is penuriousness—in manhood, clutching avarice—in old age, it produces that strange being which men call a miser. He is one that loves money better than his kind—better than friends or relatives—better than himself, until he even grudges his own body its needful food and clothing. All his sensiblilities are hardened, and every feeling of generous sympathy dried up. "Take heed, and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." "For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Many grow old, without attaining to true wisdom. "Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."

My young friends, you are launched upon the ceaseless current of life. Our earnest desire and prayer to God for you is, that it may bear you on to attainments of constantly increasing usefulness, holiness and happiness. We would do what in

us lies to make plain and alluring to you the path of virtue, and godliness, and guard and fortify you against the temptations of vice and the enticements to wickedness.

> "Broad is the way that leads to death,
> And thousands walk together there;
> But wisdom shows a narrow path,
> With here and there a traveler."

In that narrow path be it yours to travel until you reach the heights of the mount of transfiguration and hold communion with the blest. But all who sail on life's ocean, do not reach this port of bliss. The history of Absalom stands as a solemn warning against rashness of temper—want of self-government—and especially against rebellion towards parents. "Honor thy father and thy mother." "Render to all their dues—tribute to whom tribute—and custom to whom custom—fear to whom fear—honor to whom honor. Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's."

The Lord help you my young friends to be followers of those who through faith and patience have inherited the promises.

IV.

Prov. xiv : 12—"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

Job xxi : 11—"They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance."

CONDUCT, like trees, may be judged by the fruit. "A good tree," said the great Teacher, "cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit: wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them." A course of conduct or a habit of action, producing strength of body, vigor of intellect, purity of morals and earnestness of piety individually, socially and universally, cannot be evil, neither can one resulting in the reverse of all this be good. Hence, in judging of the propriety or impropriety, safety or danger, of any cause of action, regard should be had to its tendency.

The torpid adder may seem harmless, but cherish it not, for, warmed into life, its sting is deadly. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death." It seemed right to the younger son in the parable to have his portion in his own hand, and to leave the influences of the paternal roof; but the end was poverty and wretchedness.

To some it seems right to use the inebriating draught; it conduces, say they, to health and social enjoyment. Hence, they use it occasionally, or habitually, and give it to their children. Thus a taste is created, habits formed and strengthened, which often lead to degradation, wretchedness and ruin.

The doctrine of the text plainly is, that the character of any course of conduct is according to its tendencies.

Look well, then, my young friends, to your ways. Ponder the paths of your feet; avoid everything whose tendency is to evil. Do not kindle the fires of desolation, lest they burn to the lowest hell. However fascinating any course of conduct may be, if you perceive its tendency is not good, abandon it at once. "Go from the presence of a foolish man," said the inspired sage, "when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge." Abandon any course of conduct when you perceive its tendency is to evil. If it tend to prodigality, to the wasting of body or mind, morals or estate, avoid it. If it lead to evil associations, turn from it. Go not in the way of evil men, refrain thy feet from their paths. "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Moreover, if it tend to injure others, then, for their sakes, let your example and precept be against it. "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest 'behold, we knew it not,'

doth not He that pondereth the heart, consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it? and shall not He render to every man according to his works?" Be your brother's keeper, knowing that at your hands doth God require it.

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

Were you about to undertake a journey to a distant region, and were you informed that two ways led to it, you would naturally desire to know which of them was the better. If you were told that one of these ways was very enchanting at the commencement, that it was bordered on each side with beautiful and fragrant flowers, thronged with gay companions, cheered with fascinating music, studded with houses of entertainment and pleasure, gorgeously decorated, and furnished with all manner of delicacies, tempting to the taste and gratifying to the appetite, that, from these, music poured fourth her voluptuous swell, and forms of beauty were there seen with lightly tripping feet, swaying to and fro—perhaps you would say, 'thus far the way is alluring.' But, if you were told further, that, as you passed onward, the flowers disappeared, leaving no fruit, but giving place to thorny and barren bushes, that the gay throng became a heartless company, selfish and irritable, that sounds of pain succeeded the fascinating music, that houses of infamy and disgusting revelry took the place of the splendid palaces, which at first in-

vited the traveler to rest and entertainment, that the carcases and bones of self-murdered men were strewed along the path, and that, finally, the entrance into the region to which you were traveling was by a dark and dreary valley, beyond which all appeared involved in the deepest gloom, and that you would hear the cries and lamentations of those who were struggling through, bitterly condemning themselves for traveling that way, surely, if you were told all this, you would anxiously inquire 'what of the other way — is it safer?' and you would say, 'deliver me from this one.'

If then, you were told that the other way seemed less inviting at first, that its flowers were of less brilliancy and luxuriousness, being harbingers of fruit, rather than mere types of beauty, that it was less thronged than the other, and that those who walked there were rather grave than gay, rather cheerful than merry, that the music which rung out upon the air was rather of a subdued and thoughtful cast, than that which betokened unrestrained and thoughtless mirth, that the scene presented to the traveler was rather that of labor than that of amusement, that the sounds were of the ringing anvil, the grating stroke of the drill upon the rock, the echo of the axe and the maul, the crash of falling timber, and the hum of the factory, that the houses of entertainment were plain rather than showy, the fare substantial rather than costly and tempting, that ever and anon the

Church of God lifted up its spire, and words of earnest importunity, of solemn prayer and praise saluted the ear. If you were told that, as you passed onward, the scene increased in beauty, that the flowers gave place to wholesome fruits, that the sights and sounds grew more harmonious and delightful, that the travelers, as they passed onward, became more and more endeared to each other, their words expressive of deeper affection, and more lively sympathy, that the forms which met the eye, even of age, bore the evidence of vigor and confidence of safety, that their countenances betokened contentment and glorious hope, that as you approached the valley which terminated the journey, you saw that it was spanned by a beautiful rainbow, light rested upon its bosom, and, beyond, you saw a country glowing with beauty and fruitfulness, that the travelers, as they entered the valley, you were further told, often broke forth into rapturous shouts of gladness, expressing the greatest joy that they had traveled that road. Such a description of the two roads leading to the region whither you were expecting to emigrate would, one would suppose, be to you a matter of great interest, and you would not hesitate, if you believed your reporter, to choose the latter described way. See in this, then, the way of worldly pleasure and the way of religious duty. Choose ye this day which you will pursue. Remember "the way of transgressors is hard." Sooner or

later it will bring misery. On the other hand, "the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace."

Do you ask for counsel? Hear it in the dying charge of the royal Psalmist to the successor to his throne: "And thou Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off forever."

Do you ask an example? See it in the great leader and lawgiver of Israel: "By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of reward."

My young friends let me commend to you the way of godliness. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Look then to the tendency of your conduct. Be sure you are right in your perceptions, your principles, your habits and your aims. Remember there is danger of deception. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." From the end of

such a way, and the way itself, may the good Lord in mercy preserve us.

But I have selected also another text, which introduces the subject of dancing. The word is of ancient use, but the exercise denoted by it is not by any means identical in character. Hence when I am asked, as I sometimes am, what I think of dancing, my answer must be modified by the kind of dancing alluded to, and especially by its object. If because dancing is sometimes spoken of in the word of God with approbation, we should take occasion to justify modern dancing, I verily think we should be found false witnesses for God: we should speak approvingly of that which His word condemns. Some indeed profess to see no harm in modern dancing, and even encourage it, as right and good. I can only say I have not so learned the teachings of religious truth, or even the lessons of morality.

The words in the original Scriptures of the Old Testament, rendered to dance, dancing, etc., signify lively motion, such as leaping, jumping, bounding, whirling round and round, reeling to and fro. They do not of themselves decide whether the motion is regular or irregular. When accompanied by music, either vocal or instrumental, it is fair to infer that the movement corresponded to the time of the music. Otherwise, it was probably simply an imitation of the movements of the leader. The words used in the New Testament signify move-

ment regulated by time. Sometimes the word employed indicates a company moving in accordance with the time of music.

The ancient dance seems not to have been, however, of any established order; but to have taken its character from the occasion and the impulse or genius of the leader. The words of their song were also extemporaneous.

The texts or passages of Scripture relating to dancing may be divided into three classes.

First--Such as refer to it as an amusement practiced by the vain and ungodly, or by children as a childish sport.

Secondly—Such as refer to it as an accompaniment of idolatrous worship. And,

Thirdly—As connected with divine worship.

To the first class, belongs the passage from which the text is taken. The Patriarch is describing the condition and sentiment of the prosperous wicked. "They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, 'depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve Him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto Him?'" This clearly indicates the character and sentiment of a wicked people.

The dancing of their children we may fairly conclude was characterized by the same spirit.

Another passage we have in 2 Sam. vi: 20, "David, King of Israel had danced before the ark with all his might," as an expression of religious joy. Michal, his wife, looked upon it as exceedingly disparaging to the dignity of his office. She addressed him with bitter irony, "How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself." The allusion, probably, was to the manner in which the vain and worthless were wont to play the buffoon for purposes of amusement.

Another passage of this class we find in Matt. xiv: 6: "But when Herod's birth day was come, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod." Herod and his guests were in all probability heated with wine, and in a condition to be pleased with the appearance and attitude of a dance that would have shocked the modesty of decent and sober-men. In the later times of the Roman republic, we are told, that it was considered highly disgraceful for a freedman to dance, except in connection with religious exercises. On other occasions, it was practiced only by slaves and courtesans for the entertainment of the company. Herod, a man of libidinous character, was excessively pleased with the dancing of

the daughter of Herodias, and promised to give her anything she would ask, and she, by maternal advice, requested the head of the man who had faithfully reproved that mother's incestuous and licentious conduct. The dancing in this instance belongs evidently to the class of vile amusements.

In Matt. xi: 16, 17, we find dancing alluded to as a childish sport: "But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows and saying, 'we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced, we have mourned unto you and ye have not lamented.'" This seems to be an allusion to a childish sport, in imitation probably of the dancing in triumphal processions accompanied by responsive expressions of joy.

The second class of passages refers to dancing as an accompaniment to idolatrous worship. Thus in Ex. xxxii: 19, we read—"And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing, and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hand and break them beneath the Mount."

Another passage we find in 1 Sam. xxx: 16: "And when he had brought him down, behold they were spread abroad upon all the earth, eating and drinking and dancing." This is said in reference to the Amalekites who had taken the city of David, and carried off the spoil. Their feast and dancing were probably in honor of their gods, to

whom they ascribed their success in the expedition.

The third class of passages refers to dancing as connected with divine worship. Thus Ex. xv: 20, "And Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances, and Miriam answered them, 'sing ye to the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously,' the horse and his rider has He thrown into the sea.'"

See again in Judges, xi: 34: "And Jepthah came to Mizpah unto his house, and behold his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances." This was no doubt intended as an expression of religious joy and praise unto God for His blessing upon the hosts of Israel and her father, their leader.

See again Judges xxi: 18, 19–21: "Then they said 'behold there is a feast of the Lord in Shiloh yearly, in a place which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah.' Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, 'go and lie in wait in the vineyards, and see and behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards and catch, you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh." This was plainly a dancing of a religious character, it was on an occasion of a feast unto the Lord.

So also in Psalm cxlix: 23: "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King; let them praise His name in the dance." Again, Ps. cl: "Praise Him with the timbrel and dance."

So also 1 Sam. xviii: 6, 7: "And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistines, that the women came out from all the cities of Israel singing and dancing, to meet King Saul with tabrets, with joy and with instruments of music. And the women answered one another as they played, and said, 'Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands.'" This, as in the case of Miriam, was no doubt intended as an expression of religious joy and gratitude unto God.

So also in 2 Sam. vi: 14: "And David danced before the Lord with all his might." This was on an occasion of great religious joy, being the return of the ark, the symbol of the Divine presence, to the city of David, even Jerusalem.

In Ps. xxx: 11, it is written: "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing," and in Sam. v: 15: "Our dance is turned into mourning." Both of these passages show, by their connection, that they have solemn reference to the dealing of the Lord with the people, and hence express religious emotion.

Another passage we have in Jer. xxxi: 4, 13: "Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel, thou shalt again be adorned

with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry." "Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together, for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them and make them rejoice from their sorrow." This refers to the restoration of Israel to their own land, and the joy consequent thereupon. It is manifestly a religious exercise.

There are two other passages, one Eccl. iii: 4, where it is said: "There is a time to dance." The other in Luke xv: 25: "Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and drew nigh to the house he heard music and dancing."

The first of these passages may be a general expression, or simple statement to the effect that there are times in which certain things occur without at all deciding upon their moral character. "A time to be born and a time to die—a time to kill and a time to heal—a time to weep and a time to laugh—a time to mourn and a time to dance." Possibly nothing more is intended than to say life is a checkered scene, full of variety, having its scenes of joy and grief, gaiety and sadness. But if it means there are times suitable for these various exercises, then we must bear in mind that these words were uttered by an inspired king of Israel. They are found in a book penned after the days of his youth had passed, and when contemplating his departure to another world. We must bear in mind that the Israelites were accustomed to dance,

as expressive of their joy in God. From these considerations, we may fairly infer that Solomon's time suitable for dancing, was when God wrought great deliverances for His people. We may fairly infer that the character of the dance was earnestly religious. It was a praising of God with heart and soul, mind and body. He could mean plainly nothing more or less than that there were times suitable to shout the praises of God for His merciful loving kindness towards His people.

The passage in Luke is descriptive of a family festival, occasioned by the return of an erring, wandering son. The whole imagery is Jewish, and we may fairly infer, that the dancing was intended as an expression of gratitude to God for His goodness in bringing back the son alive to his father's house.

From all these passages we are led to conclude:

1. That dancing was anciently used as an amusement of the vain and wicked, and as a childish sport.

2. That it was sometimes an accompaniment of worship, both idolatrous and divine.

3. That it was practiced in the open air and in the day-time.

4. That it was not a promiscuous intermingling of the sexes, but sometimes by companies of women, and at other times by companies of men.

5. That it was not usually regulated by set form, or by prepared words of music; but adapted

to the occasion, according to the judgment or skill of the leader.

6. And lastly, that modern dancing has very little in common with the dancing spoken of in the Bible. It does not profess to be religious, but its tendency is manifestly the reverse.

We infer, therefore, that Christians should not countenance, by their presence or participation, modern dancing, and for many reasons:

1. Because it is condemned by the great majority of the godly. The voice of the congregation of the Lord's people pronounces it a sinful amusement. It is not condemned merely by a few melancholy persons who never smile, and whose countenances are always stern and gloomy; but by the great mass of the cheerful pious, whose countenances are ever serene and about whose lips the glad smile is ever playing.

Again, it has been condemned by various branches of the Church in highest judicatories. Our own Assembly has characterized it as a fascinating and infatuating amusement—as stealing away precious time—dissipating religious impressions, and hardening the heart.

Again, it is an amusement pre-eminently worldly. Even worldly men are ready to say the professor of religion has no business to associate, in that thing, with those who mingle in the giddy mazes of the dance. They feel that between the exercises of the sanctuary and the ball-room—there

can be no concord. They look upon the gay professor whirling in the dance as utterly out of place —his profession as a counterfeit.

It does not belong to that class of amusements which may be called common to the Church and the world—the professor and the non-professor. Such as trials of intellectual skill, or those manly and athletic exercises which both indicate and promote physical and mental vigor. It belongs to the class of amusements which draw men to the card table, the race course, or the drinking saloon. The passage from these to the ball-room is a beaten track, and transition from one to the other occasions no moral shock.

Not so, however, in regard to the praying circle, the communion table, the sanctuary, and the secret place of communion: the transition from these to the parlor dance or the ball-room, is morally shocking. The moral atmosphere is as opposite as the poles. Dancing is pre-eminently a worldly amusement. It marks devotion to the world, and is inimical to ardent piety. Its tendency is destructive to heavenly-mindedness. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "He that is a friend of the world is the enemy of God, for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but of the world." Professors of religion are as much out of place at a dance as the primitive Christian would have been at a heathen feast. "For if any

man see thee, which hast knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak, be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols?" Even so in regard to the professor of religion present at the dancing room. It is no place for a Christian. It does not conduce to spirituality. It is not the place where faith is strengthened, where love increases in fervor, where holy hope brightens, where humility is deepened, and zeal in the service of God kindles into a purer flame. No, Christian! unless you court leanness to your soul, you had better shun the dance with all its associations.

The soul, anxious about its salvation, should not attend the dance. Some have done so, and there received a deadly quietus to all their anxiety. They have thus signed the death warrant against their own souls. They have there effectually yielded themselves body and soul, for time and eternity, to the devil. Of one sad case, I remember to have read. A young lady became deeply anxious for her soul's salvation. Her parents, unhappily, were opposed to religion. They opposed their daughter, sought to divert her attention, and at length by the promise of a splendid dress they gained her consent to attend a ball. The dress was provided, and the child went to the gay assembly. The music and the dance began, and she mingled in the scene. Her religious interest gave way under the tide of gaiety, and she returned

home stupid and unfeeling. Shortly after the time of the dance, came the time to die. Disease preyed upon her system, and the physician said her days were numbered. When she heard the sad tidings she asked for that ball dress to be brought, and, in the presence of her parents, pointing to it, said, "father, mother, there is the price"—and here death stilled her voice. Probably, she would have said the price of my soul, but eternity alone heard the rest. For it, she had bartered her soul to the devil. For it, she had broken away from the influences that were drawing her to heaven, and threw herself on the tide that was sweeping on to hell. Anxious soul, do not be allured to the ball room, for the destroyer is there.

Again, do not go to the ball room, because it is no place for an anxious soul to die. There is a time to die, and death has sometimes come and lifted up his gaunt form and laid his iron hand upon the dancer. Death in the ball room!! What a thought? Music and the feet of gay dancers keeping time to the march of death. How gaily attired the lifeless form, jeweled fingers and braided hair, and robe of tissue to lie in the embrace of death, the last accents that fell upon the ear told of mirth and gaiety—the last scene that met the eye were forms that swayed to and fro in the mazy dance. How terrible the transition from the festivities of the ball room to the solemnities

of eternity. Ah! the ball room is no place for an anxious soul to leave the world.

But there are those who are not Christians, nor are they anxious. They are as free from anxiety as the gay butterfly. With them perhaps the dress and ornaments suited to the ball room, are matters of greater interest than anything else. What then shall be said to such? Is there any heart there susceptible to appeal, any conscience to feel the force of moral considerations? Is there any relation existing which furnishes an avenue to the soul? The searcher of hearts alone can tell. O Lord, thou knowest!

Are the children of pious parents found in the ball room? Children, upon whom the seal of God's covenant with His people has been placed. Children, sealed with God's own seal? The dance becomes not you. Do you say you never consented to the deed of your parents. Dear child, your parents being in covenant with God felt that divine authority and divine love constrained them to recognize God's right in their offspring. Do you say, you wish you had been born of ungodly parents, and that God's right in you had never been intimated? Dear child, beware how you countenance such a desire. God has ordered your lot in wisdom, and it becomes you to be still, and recognize His sovereignty over you, and His right in you. I have heard of one who in view of his condition and responsibilities, said he wished he

had never been born. "Child," said the judicious parent, "you are born and the wish is as idle as it is wicked. Instead of thus wasting time in wicked wishes, employ it in seeking God's mercy and blessing, and through eternity you may rejoice that God gave you a being." The appeal was a word spoken in season. The child lived to serve God, and dying left a blessed assurance of a happy immortality. Child of pious parents upon whom the seal of God's covenant has been set, you *are* born. Your lot in life has already been fixed, and let me say, earnestly and solemnly, the dance does not become you. You dishonor your parents whenever you engage in it. Your conduct says, either that your parents have not carried out towards you their covenant vows made at your baptism; or else that you have not heeded their instructions. They promised "to bring you up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The dance tends to train you up for the world and him who is the god of it—the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Child of pious parents, upon whom the seal of God's covenant has been placed, you cannot engage in the dance without dishonor to your parents. God has said, "Honor thy father and thy mother:" that implies that you obey them in all that is right—yea more, that you do right and avoid wrong, whether they command it or not.

Children of pious parents, whether formally for God or not, ought not to mingle in the dance, because it leads to evil association. The ball is proposed and tickets are prepared. They are procured by persons of various characters. The maidens are there, we will suppose, all from that class whose virtue is unsullied, even by suspicion: and there are, it may be, foreign exquisites there of reputation unknown. There are there, too, those whose histories are known, but dare not be detailed; men whose touch is pollution, whose pathway is strewed with the bones of murdered victims. These men here meet and mingle in the mazy dance with the virtuous daughters of the city or country, unchallenged and unrebuked. From the abodes of domestic love and purity, from dens of infamy, and halls that pander to appetites most depraved, they come to breathe the same air, and to engage in mutual fondlings everywhere else disgusting. Child of a home where piety and purity dwell, you have no business there. It subjects to evil associations.

And then the road from the dancing saloon to the theatre is broad and beaten. The class which frequents the one, is at home in the other. And what are the plays most popular? Do not the managers pander to the most depraved tastes? Is virtuous, modest, chaste sensibility nourished there? Is there no indelicate hint, no impure insinuation allowed there? I need not stay to

answer. Although never in a theatre, you know enough to settle such questions as these. And the dancer is sometimes there, in all her glory; but to sketch her picture to the life, would be sufficient to mantle the cheek of virtue with a blush. Like the elder sons of Noah, we would rather go backward, and throw a garment upon her.

The dancer, by a natural affinity, is easily drawn to the theatre. Perhaps there is scarcely a dancer in ten, who would feel any moral struggle to consent to an invitation to visit the theatre. Child of pious parents, sealed for God, you have no business there. Dancing tends to prepare the way for your entrance into that sepulchre of modesty and virtue.

Next in the scale comes the circus, with its gaudy prints and dresses, so constructed as to forbid modesty to look upon the wearers. Add to this its vulgar slang, leaving a stench behind, that months will scarcely suffice to remove from the community. Child of pious parents, you have no business there. They are wholesale establishments for vending moral pollution, and thither the buzzards of society repair to glut their voracious appetites. The dancer is on the way to the ball room—the ball room joins hard by the theatre, and the theatre is scarce a stone's throw from the circus. From all such, turn away. Remember, "Evil communications corrupt good manners."

But all are not pious, or anxious, or sealed with the seal of God's Covenant. Need we say anything to the class remaining. Yes, we may speak with hope, even to them. Many of them are capable of appreciating principle, and are friendly to virtue. You should not patronize the dance. The reasons already presented, have a character worthy of your attention. And besides, you are interested in all that conduces to health of body, strength of intellect, and purity of morals. Now, modern dancing does not conduce to any of these. For the most part, it is practiced in the night, in the heated and crowded hall, and continued, often, until the morning light, and is, therefore, adverse to health. It is too violent and protracted. You say, perhaps, *that*, is its abuse. I answer, if it has any healthful use, that has long been laid aside, and now, ordinarily, it only exists in the unhealthful and excessive form. We speak of it as it is, in this regard, and not as it might be.

And as to mind, as to mental improvement, it would seem like burlesque, rather than sober reason, to argue such a question.

So, also, of morals. It has never been so much as hinted, so far as I have read, that modern dancing promotes purity of morals.

We remark, again, dancing is unworthy of patronage, because it has no elevating tendency The finished dancer, may be in intellect, the most

puerile, and in morals, the most degraded. It is true, a dancer may become distinguished, may have a fame, national, or even world-wide. We are not ignorant of the fact, that the names of Madame Celeste, Fanny Elsler, and others, are known far and wide. We are not ignorant of the fact, that their pictures have a place upon the walls of many a rustic dwelling. But what is their reputation? Why! They were great dancers. About their intellect and morals, the world knows but little, and, perhaps, so much the better. No one could be expected to excel in everything. Again, we repeat, dancing has no elevating tendency.

Dancing deserves not patronage, because it tends to lower the standard of a refined and delicate modesty. The movements of a modern waltz, I shall not attempt to describe, but I am persuaded no parent, of a refined sensibility, could look upon a daughter, passing through its various evolutions, in a ball room, without pain. They would feel that modesty was insulted. And I have been told that there are forms of the dance, even more objectionable than the waltz.

Even the dress of a modern belle, for the ball room, is liable to objection, on the same score. It is a great strain upon modesty. And what is woman, however fair of face, and faultless in form, without modesty? "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman without discretion."

Modesty is a quality which highly adorns a woman. Destroy her capacity to blush, and you rob her of half her charms. To say of a young lady, that she has plenty of assurance, is a disparagement, not a compliment. Zeuxis, the Grecian painter, we are told, in painting his Helen, sought to embody in the face, the ideal of perfect beauty. To accomplish this, he sent to Crotona, famous for beautiful women, for six maidens, from the combination of whose charms, he hoped to secure perfection of feature, and expression. One of the six could not be prevailed upon to unveil her face, for she could not endure the scrutinizing gaze of a stranger. When the picture was finished, and exhibited before the public, it had electric power. The air was rent with the shouts of the people. The painter was the only dissatisfied spectator. He felt that one charm was wanting to his picture, and exclaimed, "O, for the blush of the sixth maiden." It is needless to say that the modern dancer is not likely to preserve that blush. Whatever tends to rob women of modesty, deserves the severest reprobation.

But what are the pleas for dancing? The only positive advantage, that I recollect to have heard urged, is, that it conduces to grace of movement. Possibly, this may be true. It certainly allows of attitudes, and familiarities, which, if not characterized by easy grace of movement,

would be highly reprehensible. But if we allow all that is positively claimed, namely, its conducing to gracefulness, it does seem to me that this is obtained at a very great cost. Gracefulness is too dearly bought, at the risk of the loss of modesty and goodness.

But it is said, dancing is no worse than many other things, which are done, and that, too, by some who condemn dancing. That may be true, but because theft is not so bad as murder, it does not follow that stealing is right.

But it is said that some people of acknowledged piety, do not condemn it. That may be true; but did you ever know a Christian made better by dancing, or more useful by favoring it?

But again, it is said, all who dance are not morally injured by it. That, to say the least, admits of a doubt; but be that as it may, it has been a means of the ruin of many, and if only one in a hundred are seriously injured by it, the ninety-nine should forego the pleasure for that one's sake. It is better that ninety-nine persons should not dance, than that one soul should perish. Hence, says the apostle, "If meat make my brother to offend," th t is, occasion him to strain his conscience —"I will eat no meat while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." The Lord help us, that our conduct may be only such as becometh the people of Christ.

You perceive then, that, in our estimate, dancing is one of those things which is to be judged by its tendencies. In itself, it may be neither good nor bad; but in its tendencies, as now practiced, it is evil, and only evil, and that continually. Whoever, therefore, would be pure from the blood of all men, should do what in him lies, to resist, and remove from the land, this form of dissipation and wicked vanity.

V.

Prov. xxiii : 29–35—"Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes?

"They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.

"Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things; yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

"They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again."

THE text is a very graphic presentation of the evils of intemperance, growing out of the immoderate use of intoxicating drinks. It is the subject of very frequent allusion in the sacred Scriptures, and should have a prominent place in the teachings and warnings of the sanctuary. The first distinct mention of drunkenness in the Word of God is found in connection with the history of Noah. Some have supposed that in his case, it might have been the result of ignorance, and that he was not aware of the intoxicating quality of the beverage of which he drank. However this may have been, it involved the venerable patriarch

in deep disgrace, and furnished the occasion of an offence which drew upon a portion of his posterity a dire malediction. See Gen. ix : 20–25 : "And Noah began to be a husbandman, and he planted a vineyard; and he drank of the wine, and was drunken, and he was uncovered within his tent, and Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without." Perhaps he did this by way of making sport of his father's disgrace. If so, it was a very undutiful act, and deserving of very grave reprehension. Dishonorable conduct in parents does not justify children in making merry with, or of being indifferent to, their shame. Whatever others may do, it is not becoming in children to make light of the errors and follies of their parents. The statement continues : "And Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward and they saw not their father's nakedness." These dutiful sons give us an example of kind and considerate feeling for an erring father. "And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him; and he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren."

The next account we have of drunkenness, is the case of Lot. He had lived in Sodom, a place so given up to deeds of uncleanness, that the

great God burnt up the very ground upon which it stood and made the whole country a stagnant lake. Lot escaped with his two daughters by special mercy; but afterwards, under the influence of wine, was guilty of deeds, at the very mention of which, the heart of humanity may well sicken and virtue hide her face.

Again, we find drinking wine and strong drink made the subject of a solemn prohibition in connection with the awful judgment of God upon Nadab and Elihu, sons of Aaron, for the sin of offering strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded not. "And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die."

Again, it is spoken of in connection with the treatment of the stubborn son, who would not hearken to the admonitions and counsels and corrections of the parents: "Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him and bring him out unto the elders of his city and unto the gate of his place; and they shall say unto the elders of his city, 'This, our son, is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard;' and all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die; so shall ye put evil away from among you."

We find also mention made of this sin in the case of Nabal, who is described in the Word of

God as churlish and evil in his doings, and such a son of Belial that a man could not speak to him; that is, without danger of being grossly insulted. One of those sad wrecks of humanity whom long habits of intemperance had rendered sottish and brutish.

In the New Testament, drunkenness is classified with the most shameful and ruinous vices — with works of the flesh. See Gal. x : 21 : "Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." See again, 1 Cor. vi : 9, 10. Those who are addicted to this vice are associated with the vilest characters. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God."

Moreover, we find the promoters of drunkenness addressed in a very solemn manner by the prophet Habakkuk, ii : 15, 16 : "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken, also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness: thou art filled with shame for glory: drink, thou, also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered; the cup of the Lord's

right hand shall be turned unto thee and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory."

The Word of God, therefore, furnishes our warrant and makes clear the solemn obligation upon all who minister in His name to be earnest and faithful in this matter. Here he should be instant in season and out of season, ever ready to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.

But the evil has been so obvious, the effects of it so wide-spread and dreadful, that men and women, in every situation, have been often led to lift up their voice and exert their influence for its suppression. In view of the calamities it entails and the misery it produces, parents have often, with bitter tears, entreated and warned their children, children their parents, sisters their brothers and wives their husbands. Philanthropists and patriots, statesmen and citizens have felt called upon to exert their influence and to employ their talents to prevent the continuance of this evil.

Individuals and associations, the aged and the young, the learned and the unlearned have contributed their energies to stay its dreadful progress.

On this account, it may be, it has been less frequently the topic of pulpit discussion than its importance demands. Still, the pulpit has not been silent, and few among evangelical ministers have been dumb in regard to this matter. Moreover, the religious press, and, to a great extent,

the secular, have employed their thousand tongues to sound the alarm. This indeed is, as it ought to be, but with a vigilance more sleepless and with an invention more fruitful and active. It is a monster hydra-headed, and requires more than the strength of a Hercules for its destruction.

Still the evil is not removed. It is like a disease deeply rooted in the constitution. Local remedies may check its development, in particular places, for a time, but, unexpectedly and with violence, it breaks out again. Nothing but the power of God's Holy Spirit, renewing, remoulding and pervading by His gracious influences the whole community, can entirely eradicate the fatal malady. Hence, it should be made the subject of earnest prayer. Hence, it should be smitten with the sword of the Spirit, God's own blessed truth.

The passage selected commences with earnest interrogations, or questions. "Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow?" Not that woe and sorrow are exclusively the portion of any, but that the sinful and trustful indulgences of some, make them peculiarly sufferers. "Who hath woe?" Upon whom do calamities, misfortunes and adversity fall in their greatest weight and power? Whose sorrows are the most numerous and constant? "Who hath contentions?" Who are the most noted for quarrels? Who are the most irritable? Who most frequently become involved in angry controversies with associates, friends, relatives,

children and every member of their household? Where are there the most furious brawls and constant strifes? "Who hath contentions?" What individuals? What families? What communities? What places? "Who hath babblings?" Who are most noted for foolish talking and indecent jesting, throwing wide open the door of their hearts and exposing all its hidden folly? Whose tongues are the most busy to the least profit? "Who hath babbling?" "Who hath wounds without cause?" Who injures himself in his person by putting himself unnecessarily into danger? Who are most liable to stabs and bruises and broken limbs and violent deaths by falling into ditches, or exposure to cold, or being thrown from horses, or out of vehicles? "Who hath redness of eyes?" Who are they whose vision is most liable to be dim and obscured by a constant inflammation and irritation of the visual organs? Ah, these are questions which need no Solon or Solomon to answer. There is scarcely a child but can do it. We all know; the children know. It is written as with a pencil of fire upon the face of society everywhere around us. These pertinent questions do not relate to a state of things to which we are strangers. The answers, therefore, as given in the text, do not surprise us. We are so familiar with the cause of all this, that it scarce excites a passing emotion.

They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to seek mixed wine; they that drink till strong drink inflames them. They that go to seek mixed wine; that is, wine mingled with spices to increase its strength and improve its flavor. There were those, probably, in the days of Solomon, as well as in ours, who, for profit, had license to pander and cater to the taste of the inebriate, who kept a supply of strong drink, spiced and prepared for the most excited palate. They who sought out these resorts increased their burden of woe and sorrow, crimsoned with a bloodier hue their contentions, pervaded with a more unclean and devilish folly their babblings, deepened and multiplied their unnecessary wounds, and gave to their eyes a more frightful and ghastly redness.

They that tarry long at the wine; that go to seek mixed wine; in other words, they that follow strong drink, have woe and sorrow, deep and bitter.

Nor does it affect themselves alone. Like the voracious whirlpool, or some awful maelstrom, it has a wide circle and draws all within its sweep. The dreadful evil involves in woe and sorrow all around. The family, the relatives, the whole community feel it.

So also of the contentions it engenders and the babblings it brings forth. They come with their blight and pollution, and produce their dire effects upon a large circle. And their wounds and their eyes flaming out their shame, send anguish into

other hearts and weeping into other eyes. "No man liveth unto himself alone." Distressing to themselves and all who feel for them, is the condition of those who tarry long at the wine. Alas, how many and great are the evils which intemperance has brought upon the children of men! How many vigorous constitutions has it undermined and destroyed? How many reputations has it blighted and withered? How many fortunes has it squandered? How many children beggared? How many wives has it sent broken-hearted to the grave? What floods of tears has it wrung out from the fountains of pierced affection? Ah, their number is legion.

But is there no preventive — no remedy? The text points it out. "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright." Here the most unqualified abstinence is inculcated. "Look not upon the wine." The eye is an outlet to knowledge; the wine has a tempting aspect to the appetite; it seems to fascinate the beholder with its rich redness from the grape. "Look not thou upon the wine when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright," when its sparkling effervescence rises to the surface and seems to invite the appetite. Look not upon the wine, red, rich and sparkling. There are woe and sorrow and contentions, babblings, wounds and diseases lurking there. There are crime and wretchedness and ruin

in ambush there. Look not upon it, parley not with this enemy; heed not its temptation; for in it is the serpent's tooth; in it is the adder's sting.

"At the last, it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." It is a poison that gradually infuses itself through all the system and hastens its victim, bloated and suffering, to the grave. At the last, it biteth and stingeth. At first, it may be pleasant to the taste and exhilarating to the system. It seems to be a generous ally, lending a helping hand to the whole nature; reviving the fainting, refreshing the drooping, strengthening the weak and giving activity to the sluggish. At first, it seems balm and cordial, promotive of health and gladness, but, at last, it biteth and stingeth. At last, it burns up the marrow and is as a fire shut up in the bones. At last, it is like a viper hissing and darting its poison through all the veins.

"Thine eyes shall behold strange women and thy heart shall utter perverse things." It is a fire to kindle unhallowed lusts and excite the tongue to the utterance of iniquity. What strange sights the drunkard sees, and what strange conceits his tongue proclaims!

"As one that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or upon the top of a mast;" so is the man under the influence of strong drink. He is in danger of being swallowed up by the waves, or of being precipitated headlong to death. In the

wild delirium of intoxication, he is ever ready to rush into danger.

"They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not;" a dreamy consciousness of the rough usage exercised towards him, is all the drunkard knows. Still, in his dreaminess, he has a longing for the intoxicating draught. "When shall I awake, I will seek it yet again." And he does seek it again. He is like the victim under the fascinating spell of the serpent. He flutters and flutters, it may be, but fails to get beyond the charmed circle. One who had become ensnared by this fatal charmer, used to imagine, in her frantic delirium, that she was bound to that old serpent the devil, by a chain, and, in the paroxysms of her dreadful insanity, would cry out, "he is winding the chain! he is winding the chain;" and would spin round and round in a circle, approaching the center, and upon reaching it, fall down and struggle as if contending with a power invincible. It was a strange hallucination, but in its moral application, alas, how true.

From this subject, we learn that the immoderate use of wine and strong drink is a great evil. It opens a fountain, deep and overflowing, of woe and sorrow, of contentions, wounds and babblings. It hath cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men hath it murdered, both soul and body, for time and eternity. It has turned the beautiful

Eden of domestic happiness into a waste and howling wilderness. It has transformed many a happy home into a den of squalid poverty, and made it a cess-pool of moral stench and heart-sickening pollution. It has changed the affectionate husband and kind-hearted parent into a devil incarnate, and goaded him on to deeds dark as hell and cruel as the grave. It has filled our poor-houses and jails and asylums with by far the largest portion of their afflicted inmates. It has increased the labors and expenses of our courts of justice many fold. It has added to our taxes perhaps fourfold, while it has, at the same time, made us more subject to unlawful violence. It has filled our beautiful land with pauperism and crime, and cast down thousands to the grave and to the dreadful pit of eternal perdition. Drunkards, God's Word declares, solemnly and emphatically, drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Great and innumerable are the evils of strong drink.

That intemperate drinking of ardent spirits shortens life, is a fact abundantly demonstrated. "According to estimates made by an English insurance company, out of three hundred and fifty-seven who died of drunkenness, there would have been but one hundred and ten, according to the ratio of sober mortality. It was not only computed, but scientifically demonstrated, that between the ages of twenty-one and thirty, the mortality

of drunkards is five times greater than that of the rest of the community. That between thirty and fifty, it is twice as great. The drunken man, at the age of twenty, may expect to live fifteen years, and the sober man, forty-four. At thirty, the drunkard may expect to live thirteen years, and the sober man, thirty-six. At forty, the drunkard may expect to live but eleven years, and the sober man twenty-eight. These surely are facts that need only be known to make a powerful impression on the minds of all."

We may infer from this subject, that it is our duty to use all suitable and lawful means to preserve ourselves and others from this dreadful evil. As to ourselves, we should abstain from its use just as we do from a dangerous poison. We partake of poisonous drugs when prescribed by a physician for disease, or, in the absence of a physician, we use our own judgment, in extreme cases, for relief. The idea is to place the use of strong drink just where we place the use of calomel, or any other medicine. In ordinary health, I would say — and not I, but God — "Look not upon the wine." It is true the Apostle Paul exhorted Timothy, his son in the Gospel, to use a little wine for his stomach's sake, and his frequent infirmities. As Luke, the beloved physician, was Paul's traveling companion, it may have been at his instance that he gave this advice, or otherwise, by direct inspiration, to satisfy the conscience of Timothy,

that it was proper for him so to do. Timothy probably needed to be fully satisfied that it was duty, in his condition, before he would venture to tamper with so dangerous a medicine. "Look not upon the wine." The beginning may be small, but the end is often destruction.

Drunkenness comes from moderate drinking. Those who do not use intoxicating drinks at all, will never become drunkards. Those who begin by moderate drinking, are the ones who often end in ruin. In abstinence, constant and entire, is safety. There are in this matter three classes of men: confirmed drunkards, occasional or regular drinkers, and those who abstain altogether. The ranks of the drunkard, though rapidly thinned by death, are still recruited; but from what class? Not from the entire abstinence class, but from the occasional or habitual drinkers. Look not thou upon the wine. In other words, abstain from whatever excites to its use.

But we should not live merely for ourselves. We should seek the good of all, and, so far as in us lies, protect them from the ravages of this fell destroyer. Especially should we look well to the ways of our households. Train up a child in the way he should go. Have an eye to his habits, and check every manifested inclination to the way of evil. Preserve him from temptation. If we would save him from the end of the inebriate, we should teach him to shun their path, to avoid it, to pass

not by it, to turn from it and pass away. Teach him to look not upon the wine, to shun the intoxicating draught as he would the serpent's bite or the adder's sting. So, too, should we act in regard to all under our care.

Nor should we stop at our own households, but labor to save the community. It was Cain, the wicked fratricide, who rejected the idea that he was his brother's keeper. We ought, as we have opportunity, to do good to all men: to our neighborhood, our country and the world.

We should endeavor to relieve the distressed, and not only so, but dry up the fountain of affliction. We should strike, as much as possible, at the root of the evil and prevent the growth of the deadly upas, before its blighting shade has made a desolation and a ruin to all around. Our example should be on the side of safety and truth, of temperance and virtue.

Nor should we be content until the source is dried up. What would you do, if some one should open a pond in your neighborhood and gather into it all the offal and refuse, the filth and everything that was polluting he could lay his hands on, and take pains to allure your children to play around it and inhale its noxious vapors day after day and year after year—would you quietly tolerate it? Would you not remonstrate, expostulate, and get your neighbors to unite with you, if, by any means, suitable and lawful, you might secure the

removal of the evil? Well, would such a nuisance be more pernicious to the physical well-being of your children than is the dram-shop to their moral health? True, there may be law in their favor, and men may frame mischief and work iniquity by a law. But even law, in a republican government, is in the hands of the people. There may be a moral sentiment in the minds of the people, so strong as to wipe from the statute book whatever is detrimental to moral health and purity. This has often been effected in communities and cities, towns and villages, and the time may come when it can be done again. It becomes the people, at any rate, to consider earnestly and intelligently, the subject, and act, on all proper occasions, with a wise reference to the public welfare. Nothing can be effected permanently in this direction without a wide-spread and deeply-rooted healthful moral public sentiment. Excitements may, indeed, be produced, that sweep down, for the time, all barriers; but unless the action be based upon a solid foundation, the effect will be transient. Such have been the final results of much that has been done upon this subject of intemperance.

It seems hard to persuade ourselves upon this subject, that a brighter day is not in the future. It is true, many a plan and invention resorted to by the friends of temperance has failed to accomplish the good it was hoped it would secure; but

let not the heart of him that is valiant for purity and truth, fail or be discouraged. Hope — hope on — hope ever. The time may come when a high moral sentiment shall so enter into all the ramifications of society and so pervade all classes of the community as shall cause the distiller, in haste and from principle, to quench those fires which scorch and wither and consume the morals of the people, and will lead them to stop those streams of woe and sorrow whose bitter waters carry desolation and death, to close those floodgates of vice and degradation and ruin which have wrought so much destruction.

The time may come when the vender of intoxicating drinks will stop his traffic of woe and sorrow, of contentions and babblings, and wounds without cause and redness of eyes. The time may come when no more shall be brought hither to be let loose on the community those serpents and adders whose bite and sting are killing with such dreadful deaths our fellow-citizens, our kindred, our fathers and our children.

The time may come when men will look on the barrels of liquor rolled out in the street, as did the Indian chief, when he saw them among his people. "What," said he, "does that barrel contain? Fights and quarrels," he continued; "madness and murder, disease and death." They may see there woe and sorrow, beggary and orphanage, besotted husbands and broken-hearted wives, neg-

lected children and parents dishonored, brought down with sorrow to the grave.

The time may come when men will be quick to discern, and prompt to act for, the prevention and cure of this dreadful evil.

And you, my young friends, may do something to hasten such a time. You are now upon the threshold of active life. You all have influence, and on you it depends, under God, whether that influence shall be a blessing or a curse. It may be like a stream of refreshing waters, carrying fruitfulness and gladness in all its course; or, it may be a deadly upas, under whose shadow everything pure and virtuous withers and dies. It is in your power, by the blessing of God, to give one earnest example in favor of that which is pure and noble and of good report; the true, the beautiful and the good. You can give one example in favor of temperance. It is surely reasonable to claim from you the determination to do yourself no harm; to ask you not, by forming habits of intemperance, to sow the seeds of disease in your own body, that shall send you in lingering infamy, or in bloody violence, to an untimely grave.

It is surely reasonable to ask of you not, by intemperance, to unfit yourselves for business, and thus shut yourselves out from honest and honorable employment. It is suicidal to stab your reputation with your own hand for the temporary

exhilaration of a glass of liquor. And yet, how many, in one moment, have thus broken the charm of a character hitherto sacred to temperance. I have some sad reminiscences of associates in college life. Some of the most brilliant geniuses have quenched the light of their fires long since in the maddening bowl. Others sleep in the drunkard's grave, and though not forgotten, the mention of their names in the families to which they belong is carefully avoided. Why should we call up memories of withered hopes and blasted expectations? It is surely reasonable to ask of you not, by intemperance, to blast all the fond expectations your kind friends have indulged of your future usefulness. Why should the light of so much hope and love be quenched forever?

Sometimes the idea is entertained that youth may occasionally indulge, in company, in the inebriating draught without acquiring the habits of the drunkard. They little know how dangerous it is to tamper with such a serpent; they are not aware of the power of the spell it can exercise upon them. I remember to have read of one who was drawn into the meshes of this destroyer. He was a member of the Church, and even held office there. The church labored for his reformation, but all in vain. At length, he stood up before them, and said: "Place before me, on the one hand, the Church, with all its associations, its privileges and its hopes: place before me heaven

and all the joys of the sanctuary above; and, on the other hand, place my bottle and all the woes of the damned, and I take the bottle." Great God! is it possible that an immortal spirit can make such a choice? The church could only weep and say: "He is joined to his idols, let him alone."

But, after all, sad as is the thought, it may be that some who hear me now, will fill a drunkard's grave. You are forming, perhaps, the habit now. The cords which are binding you are being multiplied and strengthened. Ah, if I could now write your history and hold it up for you to read, perhaps it would pierce with anguish your very heart. It may be your earthly destiny will be linked with one, to possess whose affections, will, for the time, seem to constitute you the happiest of men; but you will plant a thorn in that heart which will make it bleed until life itself will become a burden, a constant experience of bitter agony. You may raise the hand, plighted to protect, in frenzied madness to destroy. You may drive her shivering in the night of cold winter from the hovel to which your intemperance has reduced her, and compel her to seek a more hospitable roof, or perish amid the drifting snow that blocks up the way. The objects of your mutual affection, the pledges of your early love, scarcely covered with rags, you may treat so cruelly as to make them dread your approach to your habita-

tion. All around you may be made a waste, and you, yourself, sottish and brutish, become a pest and nuisance, until, overtaken by night and cold, you perish by the wayside, a stiffened corpse, and thus close your wretched life, with none to pity or weep at your departure. Such and similar has been the end of many. Oh, shall it be that any of these youth, whose manly forms and intelligent countenances I look upon to-day, and who have given to my words such respectful attention — shall it be that any of you shall have such an end? Shall it be that any of these now here, who are soon to enter womanhood, and who are now so carefully instructed — the pride of many a parent's heart — shall it be that you shall drag out years of misery, such as only the wife of the drunkard realizes? May God in mercy forbid it!

VI.

1 Chron. xxviii: 9—"And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off forever."

Eccl. xii: 1—"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

Prov. viii: 17—"I love them that love me: and those that seek me early shall find me."

Matt. vi: 33—"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

THESE are words of inspiration suited to arrest the attention, and awaken reflection as well as to give encouragement and direction to the efforts of the young. They come to us from the lips of David and Solomon and Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is of equal authority; still the circumstances and character of the speakers is not without its adaptation to awaken interest.

David was Israel's most warlike sovereign, and yet eminent for piety. Solomon, his son, was above all renowned for wisdom; but in Jesus Christ, we behold a wiser than Solomon and a

greater than David, in the might of his power and the glory of his conquests.

Let us then consider these messages of God to us by the mouth of the greatest commander, the wisest legislator, and from the lips of Him anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows, and who spake as never man spake.

The words of the inspired psalmist, the sweet singer of Israel, the man after God's own heart, have a special claim to our affectionate and reverential regard. They are the deliverances of an aged man, the fruit of a varied and matured experience. Thus, the Apostle Paul in one place urges his instruction upon Philemon in his being such an one as Paul the aged.

The attention is here directed to the service of God in connection with knowledge. Know thou the God of thy father. It is prefaced, however, with language that shows the out-goings of a father's heart.

"Solomon, my son." David knew that he had now nearly reached his allotted time upon earth. The vigor of his manhood had yielded to the weakening touch of time. He was not now, as he was when, in the sight of Israel's hosts, he met proud Goliah in battle; not now, as he was when he led the army of the Lord to victory and conquest. His arm had lost its power, and his form its fullness and strength. His cheeks once so ruddy, and his countenance once so well favored, were now care-

worn and wrinkled and pale. His locks were no longer bushy and black as the raven, but thinned and whitened by the frosts of age.

He was standing thoughtful on the silent, solemn shore of that vast ocean he must sail so soon. And yet doubtless his face still betokened a mind calmly staid upon the living God. Love to God and man lightened up his venerable features; faith and hope beamed forth in his eye. Peace sat enthroned upon his noble brow, while holy joy seemed sweetly to play upon his lips.

He had, in his old age, after peace had been given to his country, projected the erection of a most splendid temple to the glory of the Most High. It was not permitted him to accomplish this work, because he had been a man of war and shed much blood, and God designed this work to be performed by a man of peace, and had named Solomon, as the man. But David, in the last years of his life, was very busy in making provision for this work, and gathered together large quantities of the richest material from every quarter.

In order to enlist the people as fully as possible in the work, he calls together the officers, civil, military and ecclesiastical, and recounts, in the hearing of his brethren and people, the history of the case. Then, having tendered unto them his pious exhortations, he addressed his son.

"Solomon, my son." See the yearnings of the paternal heart. "Solomon, my son, know thou

the God of thy father." From my youth up, my desire has been unto Him. To His preserving care, to His strengthening grace, I owe all that has made my life a blessing, and my toil and service useful to my country. I have found Him my strength in weakness, my protector in danger, my guide when darkness and snares covered my pathway, my hope in despondency, and my comfort in affliction. To Him I owe all I am, all I have, and hope to be, and possess. To thy father's God, give then the homage of thy heart and the service of thy life. Said the celebrated Patrick Henry, in his last will and testament, after having signified his wish in regard to his earthly possessions—"This is all the inheritance I can give to my dear family. The religion of Christ can give them one which will make them rich indeed." The pious king of Israel left as his solemn legacy to his son and successor, the injunction of the text, "Know thou the God of thy father?" This, said the blessed Savior, "is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Knowledge must be the basis of all permanent impression. Knowledge must lie at the foundation of all right action. "Acquaint now thyself with God, and be at peace with Him, and thereby good shall come unto thee." "Know thou the God of thy father." Study His character as revealed in the works of creation. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firma-

ment showeth His handy-work." "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and godhead." But especially, doubtless, did this royal father desire his son to study to know God, as revealed in His works of providence towards Israel. How God had called Abram and constituted him the father of the faithful. How he had been with him and the Patriarchs as they went from one country and kingdom to another, saying "touch not mine anointed and do my Prophets no harm." How he had sent Joseph first into Egypt, and afterwards his brethren and father, made of them there a great nation, and brought them out with a strong hand and a mighty arm. How he had brought them into the land of Canaan, and rooted out the heathen and planted them in their stead. God's providences are indeed a great book, worthy the study of all. He who looks for great providences, says one, shall have great providences to observe. He best studies history, who finds God in it all, controlling and guiding all things. "God's works of Providence are His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions." Without Him a sparrow does not fall, and He teaches proud kings that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will.

But more particularly this father would have his son to know God as revealed in His word: to know Him as revealed in the plan of saving mercy through Christ Jesus: know Him as one of whom it could be truly said, justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne while mercy and truth continually go before His face: know Him as a sin-hating, and yet, in a way of His own providing, a sin-pardoning God.

"Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart." That is, with thy whole heart. It was as true under the Old Testament dispensation as in the New, that no man can serve God and mammon. He would have him serve God, like Caleb who wholly followed the Lord His God and serve Him with an honest purpose, a whole-heartedness that makes no reserve, with an energy that never faltered, and a zeal that never grew cold. Serve Him unwaveringly. Let it be the ruling principle. Be steadfast as the mountain rock. Be faithful even unto death.

Moreover, let it not seem to thee a hard thing, a wasteful expenditure. Do it cheerfully, with a willing mind. Let it be thy joy and delight, the offering of a grateful heart. "I beseech you, brethren," says the Apostle Paul, "by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

"With a willing mind." Thus the service of God had been to David. He loved the house of God. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts," was his own emphatic language. He cheerfully gave of his substance for the sacrifices and the building of the temple. He served God with a perfect heart, heartily and unwaveringly. He served Him cheerfully, ever with a willing mind. He remembered God from the land of the Hermonites and from the hill Mizar. But a day in God's courts was better to him than a thousand, and he had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

"For the Lord searcheth all hearts." Men may look at the outward appearance; they can see no further; but the Lord looketh at the heart. He cannot accept the blind and the lame for sacrifice. Ignorance and formality can never constitute an acceptable sacrifice unto the Lord.

> "Nothing but truth before His throne
> With honor can appear;
> The painted hypocrites are known
> Through the disguise they wear."

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting," was the prayer of David. "The Lord searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." "Be not deceived: God is not mocked." All hearts before Him are naked without a covering.

"If thou seek Him, He will be found of thee." He is near to all that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth. He has never said to the seed of Jacob, seek ye my face, in vain. If thou seek Him, in His own appointed way, He will be found of thee. In His own blessed word it is written, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And again, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." "If thou seek Him, He will be found of thee, but if thou forsake Him He will cast thee off forever." If thou neglect to seek Him, and turn thy mind elsewhere for strength and comfort, then He will cast thee off. Such indeed had been the sad history of Saul, David's predecessor. He forsook the Lord and was miserably cast off. His history stands up as a beacon-light to warn others of the rock upon which he split.

Solomon received the words of his father, we may readily suppose, with an obedient ear. His early history was full of promise. God appeared unto him twice with words of gracious encouragement and love. His latter years were somewhat tinged with darker lines, but ere his day of life was closed, he seems to have sought and obtained a gracious restoration. The instructions of his youth, like good seed, though for a while buried in dust, sprang up in his closing years and yielded fruit to the glory of

God. The books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes seem to have been written late in life, especially the latter, and they record his testimony to the vanity of all mere worldly pursuits, and direct earnest attention to the things which are spiritual. His history seems like a day, whose morning was bright and fair, its noon somewhat obscured with dark clouds, but whose evening was cheered by a glorious reappearing of the sun in the fullness of its brightness.

In the closing chapter of the book of Ecclesiastes, he calls upon the youth while yet in the morning of their days to remember their Creator. He intimates that in this is found a preparation for future trials and sorrows. It will not always be spring-time, my young friends, with you, not always seed time. Life, like the seasons, is progressive. "If," says one, "Spring puts forth no blossoms, in Summer there will be no beauty, in Autumn no fruit." The joy that pertains to mere youth, the health, the strength, and vigor, the buoyancy, the vividness of hope, the zest of vain pleasures, the freedom from care and anxiety will not always last. Days of sorrow and years of trial will rob youth of its charms and power to give delight.

Solomon, therefore, gives this counsel. Serve the Lord in your youth, if you would be prepared for the vicissitudes of after life. Religion will fit us for the toils and trials of age. "Godli-

ness is profitable unto all things," says the Apostle, "having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." "Godliness with contentment is great gain." 'The blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.' "I have been young," said the sweet singer of Israel, "and now am old, yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Religion, early piety, will nerve thee for life's battle and cheer thee in life's gloom. It will spread a mantle of peace over thy pathway, and make the landscape before thee ever calm and bright. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

In this path there is light and gladness. Even if thy sun should go down at noon, it will but usher in for thee a brighter day. In the Gospel, life and immortality are brought to light beyond the grave. They that watch the setting sun of the life of the godly, can rejoice because of the brightness of their departure. Let the evil days come when they may, let affliction wither thy youthful strength, and crush out the boyish or girlish buoyancy from thy spirit, it can not rob thee of the soul's calm sunshine, and the heart-felt joy. Thy soul shall still bathe in an atmosphere bright as noon, and calm as summer evenings be. Blessed be God, there are many such examples.

But we have placed at the head of this discourse another declaration of this man of wisdom. "Those

that seek me early shall find me." This is said as the proclamation of wisdom, which in this connection is but another word for the Savior. Those that seek Him early shall find Him. There seems a special going-out of the divine compassion towards the young. God's word speaks lovingly of those who go after Him in their youth, saying, "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness." And again, we read of a young man who came to Jesus, that "when He looked on him He loved him." "Those that seek me early." The stress of the passage is upon the word "early." Those that seek me early, early in life, while yet the dew of their youth is upon them. There is a sweetness and beauty about youthful piety that is specially attractive. A flower offered in the bud, a soul given to God in all the vigor and fullness of its being; how suitable is it. Hence says the poet, "This earth affords no lovelier sight than a religious youth."

"They that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing."

But the promise claims special attention. "Those that seek me early shall find me." There is no such special encouragement to the old. "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

Long rejection of offered mercy prepares the way for the manifestation of fearful wrath: "mercy knows her appointed bound and turns to vengeance there." "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded. But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock, when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer: they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me."

The young seeker of God shall not seek in vain. God's word so testifies, and history with the observation of God's people abundantly establishes it. But, on the other hand, few enter the kingdom who give their youthful years to the service of sin and Satan. Like the fly in the spider's web, every movement they make in the net of worldly pleasure, only serves to fasten them more securely there. "The end of those things is death." "She that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth." "Flee youthful lusts," says the Apostle, "which war against the soul." "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and pride of life, are not of the Father, but of the world. Love not the world, nor the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the father is

not in him." "Those that seek me early shall find me and whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord, but he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul. All that hate me, love death."

But we have still another text. It came from the lips of the blessed Savior Himself. His heart is full of tenderness. His eyes glisten with tears of pity and compassion. His voice is the melody of love. Hear then his earnest exhortation. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you": that is, all of temporal benefit that is necessary for your good and the glory of God.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness." We are, alas, born in an enemy's kingdom, and as soon as we are conscious of our position, we find ourselves in the kingdom of Satan. In that kingdom there is for us no safety, no peace or comfort. Its sovereign is a tyrant; its service is degrading and destructive to all our interests in time and eternity. Our first great business should be to get out of that kingdom, more especially, as all possibility of escaping from this kingdom is confined to our stay in this world. Moreover, we know not what a day may bring forth. We have no lease for our lives. Hence the Savior's earnest voice meets us upon the threshold of our mortal career and cries in our hearing, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and

His righteousness." Seek first of all a place in God's kingdom: a translation from the kingdom of darkness into that of God's dear Son. Blessed be God, a way is open, and the instructions are plain. God says, "Behold, I set before you an open door." Still there is neccessity for effort. "Strive," says the Savior, "to enter in at the strait gate." "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." Seek it first in time: first in importance: first in the use of the energy of the whole nature. Satan and the world cry, 'stay awhile and taste our pleasant fruits. Religion may do for the old and the afflicted, but youth and health can do without it. The world has her bright spots and sin has its sweets. Take now your enjoyment in these, and bid religion bide her time.' Thus the world cries, but the Savior looks down in mercy saying, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

We cannot be citizens of this kingdom and wear the filthy garments of our own righteousness. We must be clothed upon with the righteousness of Christ. This He freely offers without money and without price. Yet must it be sought. Sought as the pearl of great price, sought as beyond all else desirable and important. "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

And now, dear young friends, what will you do? Will you heed the admonition of one whose experience of the world was large and varied, who

had been exercised in great and severe trials, who had worked his way from an humble condition, through great difficulties up to a most honorable station, who had known the bitterness of desertion by friends long tried, and fondly believed to be true, one who had seen all earthly props give way, and yet had found support and comfort and success in God, one who spoke not only, from experience, but by inspiration. Will you heed his admonition? He bids you know and serve God with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind. Will you heed the instruction of the wisest among men? He bids you "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Will you heed the voice of the Son of God? David and Solomon and Jesus Christ, all address you to-day. The voice of holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, the voice of Immanuel, God with us, comes echoing along the track of ages, bidding you to give your youth to the service of God. They are a great host. To them may be added the voice of all God's people, reiterating the same sentiment. Thousands of godly parents, as they gathered around them their mantle to enter the Jordan of death, have uttered their earnest admonition, saying to the young, to their beloved sons and daughters, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Could I gather together to-day all God's faithful ministers and people under the whole heaven, their united

voice would re-echo the same counsel. And are not these worthy of attention?

I am aware that there are those who do not thus teach. Parents there are who delight to see their children lead in the vain amusements of the world. Who encourage them to pursue its wicked vanities. Parents there are who would esteem it a great calamity for their children to be pious. But if the counsel of the best, the wisest and the greatest be of any worth, then the path of duty and safety is clear.

The matter is urgent. You, dear young friends, who are not in the hearty service of God, are already under condemnation. The sentence is already passed: you are criminals condemned. The execution is stayed, but the day may be near. The destroying angel is ready at any moment to inflict the fatal stroke that seals your soul to eternal death. The message from God is "escape for thy life." Pardon may yet be found; mercy may yet be gained. How long this may continue, God only knows. Hence the urgency of the case: seek first, seek at once, there is no time to be lost, there is danger in every moment of delay. Flee, then, from the wrath to come. "Seek ye the Lord, while He may be found; call ye upon Him while He is near." "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

Once more: you should seek the Lord in your youth, because, should you live to be old, you can

have many years to employ in His service. The aged, when they are brought into the kingdom, often mourn that they have nothing left but the dregs and fragments of life to offer unto God. All the best and most active of their days have been given to the service of the devil. They often feel deeply grieved and ashamed of their folly and baseness. Ah, to think, they say, when I had youthful vigor and vivacity, when I had manhood's strength, I devoted it all to the enemy of souls. My time, my activities, my example, my substance, how have I wasted it, how nothing is left but infirmity and decrepitude. But the young, who give themselves to God, may hope that, if God spare their lives, they may be long useful. They may exert an influence on youthful companions, on manhood's associates, and on family relationships. They may hope to be extensively useful in the church and in the world. Years may come and go, and still find them vigorous and fruitful in the vineyard of the Lord.

Dear young friends, what will you do? We entreat you at once to enter into this service. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." We would have the young enlist in the service of our Master. There are places in His house still unfilled. Yet there is room. The wages He gives are, beyond expression, great. The service He requires, is no hard and unprofitable service. His own blessed word is, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

Easy and light, because of His sustaining and strengthening grace meted out according to necessity. Nor is it a degrading service, but purifying, elevating, and ennobling. His work is honorable, and His reward is glorious. The associations are of the most desirable character. The blessings connected with it are everlasting.

> "To-day, if you will hear His voice,
> Now is the time to make your choice,
> Say, will you to Mount Zion go?
> Say, will you have this Christ or no?"

Let me, then, in conclusion, renewedly tender to you the counsel of an aged, and affectionate parent. Let each consider himself, or herself, as standing in the place of Solomon, put their name, instead of his, and receive, as addressed to themselves, the tender admonition, "My son, my daughter, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off forever." Or, draw nigh and look upon the face of Solomon the wise, and hear him say, for God, "I love them that love Me, and those that seek me early shall find Me." Or, yet again, "Remember now thy Creator, in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Or, trans-

port yourself to the mount, where Jesus sat with His loving disciples, and the listening multitude before Him, and look into His gracious, beaming eye, and see the workings of His heavenly countenance, and hear the melody of His peace-speaking voice, as He says—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

VII.

1 Chron. iv: 9, 10—"And Jabez was more honorable than his brethren: And his mother called him Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested."

BIOGRAPHY, or the history of individual life, is often specially instructive and impressive. Especially is this so, when the person was the possessor of traits of character of great excellence. There is then presented a model worthy of imitation. It is a trite remark, that example is more powerful than precept, and this is true when presented to the eye of the mind as well as when it stands revealed to the natural vision. Hence the judicious and reflecting parent is wont to put into the hands of his child, histories of the great and good, according to his estimation of what constitutes greatness and goodness. The patriot selects the biography of illustrious patriots, the Christian, of eminent Christians. It is with grateful recollection that I now recur to the course of a widowed and godly mother, who early placed in the hands of her only son "Janeway's

Token For Children," being a collection of the biographies of pious youth, as also the lives of Newton, Washington and the Pilgrim's Progress. The impression made upon my mind by the perusal of such books as these at an early age, was strong and vivid and has never forsaken me.

And truly, this is a matter worthy the attention of all parents. What books do your children read? is a question next in importance to that of what company do they keep?

The Bible abounds in biography. Some of it of the most thrilling character, and there are perhaps but few young persons who could not be interested in the history of Joseph. Scripture biographies vary very much in their extent. Sometimes, we have a detail of much particularity, presenting the blemishes as well as the excellences of the person whose history is narrated. At other times, only a slight sketch is given, altogether favorable or the reverse. Thus, we have variety to charm, and to call for the exercise of discrimination: some examples for imitation and some for warning.

The little sketch of the life of Jabez is all contained in the text, and besides what is here narrated, we know nothing. His history fills a small space, but it is in the best of books, and hence his name is had in everlasting remembrance. It occurs in a chapter containing little else than a record of names. The common reader perhaps

often skips such a chapter, and hence the life of Jabez is by him unread. They who read, come upon it as a traveler in a desert to a beautiful oasis, where the grateful verdure, the shady trees, and the gushing spring constrain him for awhile to tarry and rest; or, it is as one who, passing through his garden late in the season, is surprised to find a beautiful flower in full bloom, while all around is withered and dry. He, unconsciously almost, pauses to admire.

The name Jabez signifies trouble or sorrow. His mother so-called him because of her sorrow at his birth. Why she was then so sad, we are not informed. Possibly like the wife of Phinehas, she had heard of her husband slain in battle, and she clasped her babe to her heart, as fatherless, and wept as she thought who will provide for and train the helpless one, never to know a father's smile, never to share a father's care.

Possibly, the state of the country was such as to make her feel that there was no longer any comfort in being the mother of sons. Perhaps, she had lost many already on the gory field of battle, and trembled and shrunk back at the idea that this one too would one day fall by the hand of violence.

Possibly, like Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, the birth of the child was the death of the mother, and as her soul was departing she called his name Jabez, or sorrow.

Possibly, her older children had by their ungodly and dishonorable conduct disappointed her hope, and she felt that the increase of children was the increase of sorrow. Thus our first mother called her second son Abel or vanity, signifying the disappointment of her expectation in the first. All this is conjecture, yet is it founded upon facts in the history of our race? The same event which fills a family with joy, may under other circumstances occasion only the pouring out of their sorrows.

Happily the history of Jabez assures us that while his birth was viewed with sorrow, his life was a blessing to the world. The mother's anxieties ripened into blessed fruit. He lived to some good purpose. He has left behind a name which is as ointment poured forth. "A wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother." "If I had no other reason for endeavoring to live a godly life," said a good man, "I would do so to cheer the heart of my mother."

Jabez we are told was more honorable than his brethren. He was the flower of the flock, the ornament of the family.

What his brethren were, we know not. They may have been men of great strength of body, may have been men of high spirit that would never brook an insult, never fail most fiercely to resent an injury. Or they may have belonged to the pleasure-loving throng who eagerly seek their

gratification in scenes of merriment and folly. They may have been gay among the gayest, and their laugh the loudest among the wicked and vain. They may have been men of wealth or place, or genius. All this they might have been for aught we know to the contrary, but they were not honorable like Jabez.

The Scriptures' standard of honor is not that of the world. They do not justify the calling of the duelist a man of honor. They say, "that he that hateth his brother is a murderer;" much more then, he that would deliberately determine to kill him, or be killed by him, because of some insult between them.

The Scriptures do not call a man honorable because he has riches. They say, "let not the rich man glory in his riches." They say, "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." The world calls those poor who are destitute of money or that which will bring it; but even the world is constrained to admit that he is poor who has nothing else but money. And alas, there are many such: strip them of their wealth and there is nothing of value left.

The Scriptures do not call a man honorable because he has office. They rather teach that office may be the occasion of more fully exhibiting the dog that is within. Thus the prophet wept as he looked upon Hazael. "Why weepest thou," said he? "Because," said the other, "I know the fierce

and relentless cruelty which thou wilt practice upon my people. "What," replied Hazael, "is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" "The Lord," said he, "hath showed me that thou shalt be king over Syria." The dog was in him, and it would then appear.

Jabez was more honorable than his brethren, but his honor, it is plain from Scripture, did not consist in being a duelist, or a man of great wealth, or of high official station.

The mind is the standard of the man. "That the soul be without knowledge is not good." "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." "Them that honor me, saith God, I will honor."

We are led to conclude that the honor of Jabez consisted in learning and piety; in the cultivation of the intellect and the heart. These have ever been the avenues to true honorable attainments.

That he was a man of learning, we cannot positively assert, but we learn of a place named Jabez which was inhabited by the scribes, and this name affords some ground of inference that it derived its character from him, or that he was its founder. The names of places of learning are some testimony, at least, of the character of those after whom they are called.

But in regard to the piety of Jabez, the testimony of his biography is clear. Nor is earnest

piety incompatible with eminent intellectual attainments. He was a man of prayer. This indeed is a great and unvarying evidence of piety.

> "Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
> The Christian's native air."

"Behold, he prayeth," was the divine assurance to Ananias that Saul of Tarsus was a changed man.

The friend who saw Washington alone upon his knees in prayer, no longer doubted his piety or the success and goodness of the cause in which he was engaged. Prayer is the soul's communion with the object of its worship.

Jabez called upon the God of Israel. He was no doubt a descendant of Abraham, and had been taught to know the true God, and his prayer was unto Him. Others might worship idols, if they would. As for him, his prayer was unto the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God who had led Israel's host through the desert and brought them to the land of Canaan. Jabez called upon the God of Israel.

The prayer he offered is very comprehensive. It related to blessing in soul and in body, in basket and in store, for time and for eternity. It is characteristic of the truly pious that they go to God for every thing. Not only in adversity, but in prosperity also; not only for spiritual blessings, but also for temporal supplies. "Give us," says the prayer the Savior taught His disciples, "Give

us day by day our daily bread." The child that loves its parent, goes to that parent in every circumstance, in joy as well as sorrow, in pleasure as well as danger.

Some seem to regard this prayer as his daily petition. It is indeed suited to the whole life: suited to the young voyager just launching out upon life's unknown sea: suited to the middle-aged man amid the cares and anxieties incident to a dependent and growing charge, and to the aged man also, whose hoary locks and wrinkled brow give evidence that he is passing away.

"Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed." Here is a prayer suited even to a child. We may have kind parents, affectionate brothers and sisters, may have many warm friends with hearts full of love to us, we may have all the temporal good we can ask, and yet not be blessed indeed. We may have, with all this, hearts alienated from God, and thus be without any connecting link to the source and fountain of all true good.

"Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed," said Jabez. Perhaps this was his first, his infant prayer. He knew that God could bless him, could make his heart truly happy although his name was sorrow. He knew that God did not look at the name, but at the heart.

He believed that God was able to bless him. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently

seek Him." Ah, said one, it is good for us to feel, in all our need and in view of all our wanderings, that, in seeking God, we are coming to a Father. He is our Father still.

Jabez doubtless believed that God was ready to bless him. So he had been taught. He knew that many promises had been held out to encourage the sincere seeker for divine favor. God had set forth Himself as merciful, the prayer-hearing, and the prayer-answering God.

There were the mercy-seat, and the altar, and the appointment and acceptance of sacrifices, and there were many examples of men who had been blessed of God. All this told him that God was willing to bless. He knew that God alone could grant true blessing. In vain were kind friends and riches, and worldly honors and pleasures to confer happiness without God. "Oh," said he, "Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed."

Such a prayer is suited to the young. They indeed should seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. They should desire not to take a single step in life without God's blessing. Wilt thou not, dear youth, from this time learn to say, our Father be Thou the guide of our youth. The blessing of God, it maketh rich and He addeth no sorrow with it.

The prayer goes on, "And enlarge my coast." Jabez looks out now to the active scenes of life. He needs a place of abode and means of support

for himself and perhaps for others dependent upon him. Perhaps an aged mother leans upon his arm in her declining years. The state of society in which he lived, required probably that he should secure a possession with his sword and his bow. The land God had given to Israel for a possession, was still largely in the hands of their enemies. He was straitened in his lot and needed enlargement. For this, he made special prayer. It was not enough that there was a general promise. He sought to place himself personally under the care of Jehovah, and to obtain from Him a place wherein to dwell. He would depend not upon his own strength and skill, but first of all, ask enlargement from God.

Here is an example worthy of imitation for the young. You are looking out for a share in the comforts of life. You have been instructed that the hand of the diligent maketh rich, but it is also said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Without the blessing of the Lord, in vain do we rise up early and sit up late and eat the bread of carefulness. You may see around you many that have secured a competency, and others who are looking on with but little gains. You desire to obtain a competency of the good things of this life, you hope to form virtuous and honorable connections, and ere long, as life advances, gather about you a

household, have the means of providing for their physical comfort and, so far as in you lies, their intellectual and moral elevation. Now look at the conduct of Jabez, and in your place imitate his example. Having first earnestly sought and obtained in God's appointed way the richest blessing, even life to your soul, seek the guidance and gracious assistance of God, in reference to worldly interests. Pray that God, in His providence, would open for you the way in which He would have you go, direct you as to the business in which He would have you engage, prosper you in the pursuit of it, and enable you to obtain an honorable position in it. Your sphere may be an humble one, but the humblest occupation, if honest and useful, may be pursued in a manner reflecting honor. Of you it may be said, you were more honorable than your brethren. You may be the ornament of your family. You may be prosperous and useful, living to the glory of God and the good of men.

But he goes on: "And that thine hand may be with me." We need the continued protection and guidance of God. We may be made the subjects of His richest blessing may be blessed with room wherein to dwell; we may have abundance of provision, be honorable in our position and associations; but let God withdraw His protecting and guiding hand, and how soon will all our attainments be gone? How soon will our honor

wither like flowers broken from the stem? How soon will our hopes perish as plants that are deprived of moisture? How soon will our enemies triumph over us? How soon may we turn aside, and by a single act blast a reputation it has cost years of labor to procure? We read of some of the kings of Israel whose hearts were lifted up with pride and they forsook the Lord. Of the rock that begat them they were unmindful, and hence they fell from their steadfastness. Our strength is in God, and our safety is found in keeping near unto Him.

We need God's hand of power to preserve us from our spiritual enemies. Satan like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour. We are unable to withstand him alone. God's power is able to protect us from the mouth of this lion.

We need God's continual protection and blessing in regard to our temporal comforts. The best laid plans often end in disappointment. How often do men squander large estates? The patrimony which years of patient labor and anxious care had gathered, is left to children who waste it by reckless prodigality. Without God's preserving and guiding grace, riches are a curse. And how frequently too have men been led to acts of imprudence by which their own hard earnings have been miserably scattered?

We need God's hand to sustain and guide us continually, both in things spiritual and temporal.

'Hold thou me up," says the Psalmist, "and I shall be safe." And again, "for Thy Name's sake lead me and guide me." Well says Jabez, "and that Thine hand might be with me." Thy hand of power and wisdom to protect and direct in things spiritual and temporal.

But he goes on, "And that thou wouldest keep me from evil that it may not grieve me." Evils that affect the body and that affect the soul. Evils spiritual and temporal. Jabez knew that all his precaution to keep off evil from himself and those associated with him, unless blessed of God would be altogether in vain. If he had a family, all his care would be insufficient, without the divine protection. They might be led away by evil company, and soon involve themselves in wretchedness and ruin, and thus fail of blessedness both here and hereafter. He is well protected, who has the Almighty for his shield: and none are safe beside.

Many a man has had the evening of his days embittered by the conduct of his offspring. Many a parent has thus gone down, mourning to the grave. Thus, Jabez knew that it might be with him. His death might thus become a confirmation of the name given at his birth. A man of sorrow.

There is wisdom in this prayer, especially if we consider its several parts as particularly suited to the various stages of human life.

First of all, in youth seek God's blessing, even the peculiar and special blessings of His grace. "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." As you advance, seek His blessing in reference to your temporal lot. Go forth to life's toil and battle, with earnest prayer that the smiles of God's gracious providence may attend thee in thy earthly calling, and fix the bounds of thy habitation in a large place. Pray that He would enlarge the range of thy blessings, and make thee extensively useful, give thee enlarged understanding, and so far as consistent with thy highest good and His glory, increase thy temporal benefits.

As cares thicken and responsibilities increase, pray that the good hand of the Lord may be upon thee, for thy guidance, and protection, and that He may preserve to thee a high degree of spirituality, nor let thy love or zeal grow cold. If called to occupy posts of trust and honor among thy fellow-men, pray that His sustaining grace may never permit thee to wander, or swerve from the paths of uprightness, and that thou mayest be enabled to guide all the affairs committed to thy trust, with wisdom and discretion.

And when old age, with its feebleness and infirmities, gathers about thee, pray that still the blessing of God may be upon thy tabernacle, that no dread mental or moral calamity may shroud the evening of thy days, but, like good old David, having served your generation, by the will of God,

you may fall asleep sweetly upon the Savior's bosom.

Such, in substance, and in truth, was the prayer of Jabez. Nor was it a vain supplication. God granted him that which he requested. Verily, He is a prayer-hearing, and a prayer-answering God. He has never said to the seed of Jacob, seek ye My face, in vain. Hence, it is wise, that in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, we should make our requests known unto God. He is near to all that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth.

Jabez' prayer was heard, and answered. It must have been the offering up of sincere desire unto God. It must have been for things agreeable to the divine will. It must have been presented in the way divinely appointed. It must have been with thankful acknowledgment of mercies, already received, and in submission to His will for the future.

Here, then, is a model character. A man of honor above his brethren, and a man of piety. True piety is, indeed, the foundation of all true honor. So far as God has seen fit to reveal it unto us, it is without a blemish. That he was not perfect, we know, because he was human; but the inspired historian has seen fit to present unto us only that part of his character which is excellent. He was honorable and prayerful, characteristics worthy of all imitation.

If its right to labor to excel in all that is good, we cannot set our mark too high. "Finally, brethren," says the Apostle to the Philippians, "whatsoever things are true, whatsover things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." To glorify God and to do good to men, is the one great and true aim of life.

If we would attain excellence in this life, or in that which is to come, we must seek it from God. His blessing seek first. "They that seek Me early, shall find Me." He alone can enlarge our coast, protect, guide, preserve, and comfort us, make us honorable in life, support us in death, crown us with glory hereafter.

I commend to you the prayer of Jabez. May your history correspond with his, and you shall not have lived in vain. Happy they who are followers of those "who, through faith and patience, have inherited the promises."

VIII.

Deut. xxix: 29—"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and our children forever"

Prov xvi: 33:—"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."

IT is perhaps natural for us all, and especially for those of us who are young, to desire to know what is to be our earthly history. Life is spread out like an unknown sea which we are bound to cross, and we wonder what shall befall us on our voyage. Will our sky be ever bright and clear—our sun always visible—the winds ever propitious—our course ever prosperous—and our companions always pleasant and ready to further our progress? Or shall we be constrained to work our way through great tribulation? Shall we always look out upon a cloudy sky—with no bright days of sunshine—with nights dark and starless? Must we meet the storm in its wildness and be often driven from our course to work against opposing winds and to struggle with adverse tides? Shall we enter into port like a gallant bark well rigged and in sailing order, or with sails torn, and disabled helm, barely afloat with loss of all but hope? Must our voyage be with companions mo-

rose and irritable, and we scarcely hear a pleasant word or know a happy hour? To all such inquiries as these, there comes a voice from Him who holds our destiny in His own hands: "Commit thy way unto the Lord. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths." We are to walk by faith, not by sight—and not to seek to be wise above that which is written in the word of truth. Our Creator has hung up a veil between us and our earthly future, and bidden us not to presume to lift it. He claims secret things as belonging unto Him, and bids us be content with those revealed. There are barriers set up, beyond which it is not lawful for us to pass.

But the whole history of man goes to show that in this regard his path has been beset by temptation. It is often insinuated that, if we could see beyond the veil, our happiness would be greatly increased. Our disposition to be content with our lot and faithfully abide by the teachings of heavenly wisdom is thereby tested, that our character may appear unto all. If in the fear of God we repress the rising of our improper curiosity, we shall doubtless escape many a snare.

Man in his estate of innocence was forbidden to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. 'O,' said the tempter, 'if you would break that hedge, your knowledge would elevate you to the condition of God himself. You would then know the good and evil before you. You

could then understand your future history and destiny.' Words alas too true, but by man not fully comprehended. But the temptation excited his desire. The forbidden object was easy of access and within his reach—yea, even in the hand of his beloved companion, and perhaps tendered to him with her most alluring smile. Man partook and found himself at once transferred from the blessed guidance of God to the captivity of the devil.

> "Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat,
> Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe
> That all was lost."

For that one act of attempting to lift the veil which God had hung up between things revealed and secret—this world has been a scene of sin and sorrow ever since.

As we pass on in the record of man's history, we find that from time to time God was pleased to make revelations to men by means of persons who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We find also warnings given against false prophets who prophesied when the Lord sent them not. Solemn prohibitions were also given against resorting to such as had familiar spirits or a necromancer, that is one who claimed to prophecy by means of the dead, for, it is added, 'all that do these things are an abomination to the Lord.' Here then we have indicated some of the ways in which efforts were, and would be made, to lift the covering from things which God claimed as His prerogative to reveal. These were practiced by the

heathen, and the people of God were strictly forbidden to learn their ways.

Still, the old leaven of iniquity continued to work. Men were found desiring to be as Gods, and have foreknowledge of the good or evil they were to experience in their earthly history. They would walk by sight, and not by faith in God. From time to time, persons were found in Israel practicing these forbidden exercises. Such they were required to put away from among them, that thus the people might be less exposed to the temptation.

Such was the condition of things in the days of Saul, king of Israel, who, being reduced to great extremities by his rebellion against God, and being fretted because divine intimations were withheld, resorted to one who had been put away as having a familiar spirit. He goes to a woman of this reputation, and seeks through her, as a medium, communication with the spirit of Samuel, a prophet of the Lord then recently deceased. The spirit, according to the report of the woman, was soon present and gave replies according to the desperate condition of his circumstances. Having forsaken God, this resort served only to aggravate his sin and increase his wretchedness. The knowledge he thus obtained, afforded him but poor preparation to meet the stern and severe trial of the coming conflict. His forces were routed and in despair he murdered himself. So Saul died for

his transgression which he had committed for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit to inquire of it. God was pleased that, being a public man, his death should be a public warning.

Passing on in the history of God's people, we find it recorded of the bloody Manasseh, that he dealt with familiar spirits, while the pious Josiah put away the workers with them.

The prophet Isaiah warned the people in his day against hearkening to those who counseled to seek unto them which have familiar spirits, to wizzards, that peep and mutter—for the living to the dead, because such acted in opposition to the law and testimony of God. From all these intimations of Scripture, we find that God's people have been warned and forbidden to practice or to give countenance to any mode of obtaining a knowledge of secret things not authorized by His word. We find moreover all along their pathway from Adam to the close of the Old Testament Scriptures, temptations were presented to allure them to intrude into things which God had not revealed. At the closing of the Old Testament Canon, the the lips of true prophecy were sealed, and so continued for centuries. The times between the closing of the Old Testament Scriptures and the commencement of the New, were among the days of the greatest glory to heathen divinations. At the time of the incarnation of the blessed Savior,

they had begun to wane, and never afterwards attained to their former consideration.

In the days of the apostles, we find mention made of men practicing curious arts, but wherever the gospel came in its purity and power, they were abandoned. On one occasion, in the renowned city of Ephesus, they burnt the books to the value of fifty thousand pieces of silver. At another place, we have an account of a damsel possessed with the spirit of divination, who brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. This spirit the apostle Paul rebuked and expelled, thereby giving great offence to those who profited by her diabolical craft. Every where, the prying into secret things, unrevealed by God and requiring supernatural agency for their disclosure, is condemned. We can discover evidences of such attempts through various instrumentalities throughout almost the whole history of man. Sometimes it has been by observing the clouds—sometimes, by the flight of birds--sometimes, by inspecting the entrails of slain beasts. Again, by what were called charms—by incantations—and by claiming familiarity with the spirits of the dead, having their favorite mediums. The responses professed to be received have been given sometimes in numbers, sometimes in peeps or chirps like the voice of a young fowl—sometimes, especially in more recent pretentions of this kind, by raps, ringing of bells —moving of tables—writing, etc.

But while in the Old Testament the manner is not detailed, the consulting of the dead is expressly forbidden. It is plain also that only wicked men gave it countenance, and that the pious every where condemned it. Moreover, it is declared of the dead, in Scripture, that they know not any thing, nor have they any more a portion in any thing that is done under the sun. As to the prudential wisdom or that which concerns temporal affairs, they have no longer any need for its exercise. The attempt therefore to consult them is folly.

In the New Testament, the consulting of the dead is not perhaps spoken of; but every sort of intruding into things not seen and which cannot be known by natural means, is discouraged and forbidden. Secret things belong unto God, but those that are revealed belong unto us. Still, in New Testament times, and onward to a greater or less degree, claims have been set up of obtaining insight into things unrevealed and belonging to the supernatural. There has indeed been a succession of such claims. Sometimes, almost entirely discountenanced except by the most degraded and vicious; at other times, appearing under the mark of piety; and again, making pretensions to a science.

But whether descending in the channel of Gypsey fortune-telling, or Indian incantations; whether taking the mask of piety and claiming to come

from the Virgin Mary or other saints of the Romish calendar—whether aspiring to a science and dealing in manipulations and circles and mediums —whether calling itself animal magnetism—clairvoyance—spiritual manifestation—harmonial philosophy—just so far as it claims to lift the veil which God has placed between things secret and things revealed, just so far should all that fear Him stand aloof from its temptations. It is true that the pretensions alluded to, have, for the time, spent their strength, and are now comparatively but little agitated. Hence it may seem superfluous to spend precious time in considering their status in the Word of God: but alas, such is human nature that, even after delusions have worn out and thus men have obtained deliverance from great and destructive errors of thought and life, they frequently become again entangled and sink down under their dark dominion. It seems then proper to record our testimony against them, and renew it from time to time, that generations as they arise may hear the voice of warning and stand aloof from the snare.

The folly of these pretensions is manifest, in that they do not furnish us with any new and useful information. As to all they profess to impart in regard to moral or spiritual principles, they are the merest nursery maxims. They add nothing to the system of truth taught in the Word of God, either essentially or by way of illustration. As to their

wonderful discoveries in reference to the heavenly world, they bear the impress of the workings of vain imagination rather than the communication of wisdom from above.

And even the greatest advocates of the truth and reality of these communications from the spirit-world, confess that contradictory statements are given, and account for it by saying that there are lying spirits who avail themselves of the opportunity to impose upon the credulous and deceive the unwary. There is then no certainty, by their own admission, as to the truth of their message.

Moreover, it tends to give us very degrading ideas of the employment and condition of the spirits of the dead. For when the august spirits of the departed for whom we feel an instinctive reverence, whether suffering or happy, are represented as appearing at the beck or nod of those who call for them, and play such pranks as these are said to do, all our views of future life are at once confused and degraded. When a person believes that a soul from the blessed world is ready to gratify a vain curiosity by telling persons in one place whether their friends are awake or asleep —at home or abroad—or how many pieces of coin they have in their purse, or what are their ages—or to stroke faces or to pull the hair in the dark—to cause tables or chairs to dance—all this is so belittling and degrading, that the mind which can re-

ceive it in sober truth must be on the highway to blank infidelity.

But the most terrible effect of this delusion is the dethronement of reason. This is a threatened judgment from God, who frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad. The cases which have thus suffered are many, and warn us of the danger of yielding to such a delusion. They tell us to beware of treading upon forbidden ground.

This text as well as the whole tenor of Scripture condemns what is called fortune-telling or resorting to those who pretend to it. Many go perhaps as a mere amusement, and consider not that they countenance a pretense to lift the veil drawn by God between us and the future. They consider not that they do evil. Such a practice is in plain opposition both to the spirit and letter of the word of God. Those who attempt to intrude into the things kept secret, by resorting to supernatural agencies are guilty of sacrilege. The tendency of such pretensions is to trick and falsehood, and shows them to belong to the kingdom of Satan. The pretenders and patrons for the most part are found among the vicious and degrading. My hearers, if we are wise, we shall avoid giving countenance to all such pretensions. 'Secret things belong unto God but those which are revealed belong unto us.'

But we have quoted another text, containing a principle which we design to employ a portion of

the present hour in endeavoring to set forth and illustrate. "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." This text plainly declares that the controlling providence of God extends to the lot. God is in the lot. The lot is cast into the lap or lot-vase and the vessel is shaken in all directions; but the whole disposing thereof, every disposition made or position taken by them is of the Lord. We see the lots or pebbles, or pieces of ivory, as the case may be, put into the vessel, then shaken and tossed about in every direction, and to us it is entirely unknown what position they will ultimately assume. To us, they seem undirected by any intelligent agent—a mere chance medley —but the text tells us they are disposed wholly by the Lord. Casting lots then is an appeal unto God to decide a matter for us through the instrumentality of the lot.

That God is in the lot is evident from the using it as set forth in the Scripture. The first mention of the lot in the Word of God, is in the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus. It relates to the services of the day of atonement, a day of the most solemn service in the whole Jewish ritual. The lot was cast in relation to the two goats, deciding which should be offered in sacrifice and which let go into the wilderness. In this case it was a solemn act connected with divine worship, and a clear recognition that God was in the lot. It was used also

by divine direction for dividing the land and assigning to each tribe their particular portion.

In 1 Sam. xix: 41, we are told, it was used by king Saul to discover who had acted contrary to the oath he had laid upon Israel. And Saul said unto God, give a perfect lot. Here God is recognized as being in the lot. In the book of Esther, we find Haman casting lots to decide what day he should select for the destruction of the Jews. Haman, although a despiser of the true people of God, affects to consult Divine Providence in reference to their destruction. In the book of Jonah, we find the mariners casting lots to learn why they were pursued with such a fearful tempest. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

In the New Testament, we find the Apostles casting lots to learn which of the two nominated, the Lord would choose to take part in the Apostleship. This was done in connection with earnest prayer. They thus recognized God in the lot.

It is then clear that the use of the lot, as noticed in Scripture, was regarded by the godly as a solemn appeal to God to decide the question at issue. They resorted to it only in important cases or by Divine direction, and as an act of solemn worship. When the heathen cast lots, it was a recognition of an unseen agency regarded as divine. They believed God was in the lot. It was resorted to when reasons sufficient to found a judgment were

not manifest. Hence, an appeal was taken to an agency supposed to know the things necessary to a correct decision. The lot is cast into the lap or lot-vase, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.

From the word lot comes lottery. Arrangements are made of such a character as to make it appear that the prize is not obtained from any control of the managers, but by an agency invisible and independent of them. How far this is the truth and carried out in good faith, it is not for me to say; but if it be true, then the appeal is made to an unseen agency. Now all invisible intelligent agencies are regarded by men as under the guidance of Divine or Satanic influence. In the Bible history, men, in appealing to the lot, appealed to God by means of the lot. The heathen, in appealing to the lot, appealed to some imaginary being regarded by them as divine, by means of the lot. They all evidently referred to an agency behind the lot. Whether the lot consisted of pebbles of different shades shaken in a vase—and the decision taken from their final position, or whether the lot was by shaking arrows in a quiver and deciding according to the one drawn out, the decision was not regarded as made by the pebble or arrow, in itself considered, but by an unseen agency that directed the position; otherwise they must have denied the government of God over the whole matter. The text declares that the lot is

disposed of by the Lord. The believer in the Bible therefore, if he appeals to the lot, understands that he appeals by the lot unto the Lord.

Is it right to resort to the lot? Ought we to appeal to God by drawing an arrow or a straw, shaking pebbles or dotted pieces of ivory, by the toss of a copper, or by means of numbers?

It is plain from Scripture that it is an appeal to God to decide, in a special manner, a matter for our guidance. It is therefore obvious that, if done at all, if ever allowable, it should be done in a serious and devotional manner. God should not be appealed unto without considering the honor due unto His name. All irreverence should be put far from us; all lightness of spirit carefully avoided. Solemnity and reverence become us in every appeal unto God, whether we appeal unto Him by oath, or refer unto Him by lot, we should bear in mind that we stand upon holy ground. God is in the lot.

We should not appeal unto God by means of the lot, except in an important matter. We would not carry a matter of trifling character before an earthly tribunal. We would feel it to be disrespectful to an earthly judge to make a formal appeal to his decision in a mere trifle. We would not take an oath, if we were men of proper reflection, in a matter of no consequence.

Again; we should not resort to the lot when the means of forming a correct judgment are already

within our reach. We might resort to the lot in a solemn and devotional manner, and upon a matter of importance, and still the appeal be unjustifiable. There might be other means within our reach sufficient to instruct us in our duty. It would therefore be wrong in us to ask God in this way for special direction when He had already furnished us with all that was necessary for our guidance.

But, it may be asked, are there no cases now in which it is proper to appeal unto God by the use of the lot? It is evident that the lot in itself considered is not necessarily a wrong thing for good men, and even the Apostles employed it. The answer therefore must take into consideration the circumstances. I doubt very much whether with the Bible in our hands, complete as it is, there remains any necessity for an appeal unto God by means of the lot—at least as private individuals—for as relates to public and governmental acts in selecting men to do battle, we are not now speaking. It seems to me that the Bible furnishes us with all the information necessary for our faith and practice. Certainly the cases where the lot should be resorted to by private individuals are very rare. "We have a more sure word of prophecy whereunto we do well to take heed." If the case be not one in which the information necessary for a proper decision is out of our reach—if it be not one of very great practical importance, or if it be not one justifying a special exercise of solemn

prayer and supplication, then it is not one authorizing a special appeal to the lot. The lot, like the oath, occupies holy ground.

If the views here presented be true and scriptural, it follows that all games of chance are wrong in their principle. It is wrong to make a formal appeal unto God in a matter of mere amusement. It is wresting an act of solemn religious worship out of its place. On this ground lotteries and all the machinery of gift enterprises are to be condemned. They are an appeal to an invisible agency for gain in a way unauthorized by the Word of God—devices contrary to the teachings of Holy Writ which requires us with quietness to work and eat our own bread and to provide things honest in the sight of men. The same may be said of card-playing in all its varieties. It is a species of lot, and hence liable to the same objections.

Moreover, in all honorable business transactions, there must be some regular and well defined proportion between that which is given and that which is received. Any principle of business that is at war with this, must either have for its foundation fraud and trick, or be characterized by ruinous folly; for just so far as you destroy this proportion, you sap the foundation of commercial prosperity. Moreover, just so far as the purchaser is encouraged to expect more than a regular proportion, for money expended, just so far are the incentives to industry chilled and weakened—and

whatever injures industry, is so far destructive to public virtue. Idleness is the stagnant pool, breeding moral pollution, miasma and death. All that is gained by speculations in lotteries, gift enterprises, and institutions of this kind, is at the expense of the principle which lies at the foundation of commercial honesty, individual industry, and public virtue. The person then who encourages them commits an act of hostility against the best interests of his country and people.

But God so governs the world that what is wrong in principle is evil in its tendency, and this lays foundation for an argument more apparent. A good tree or principle does not bring forth evil fruit—neither does a corrupt tree or principle bring forth good fruit. Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them. Though the way may *seem* right, yet if the end thereof are the ways of death, the wise will beware.

Lotteries and gambling tend to the death of industry and healthful enterprise. They tend to the death of honesty, virtue and good morals. All their associations are corrupting and degrading. They spread a charm and a snare in the way of those who parley with them and allure but to betray and ruin. This it is hardly necessary to try to prove. The tendency of these to evil is so apparent that legislative authority has felt called upon to labor for their suppression. Examples of

ruined reputation, squandered fortunes and beggared families, by these means, are legion.

I cannot now in detail depict all the anguish occasioned by these pernicious practices. The history of the conscience of the youth who has left the paternal abode with a mother's prayer and a father's blessing to qualify himself for the business of life, and has been drawn away to practice gambling, has never, perhaps, been fully written. Step by step, he has been led away in the path of ruin. Conscience checked him when he began to handle cards as an amusement, but he broke away from those checks. It pierced him when he began to stake money on the game, and when, late at night, he found his way to his lodging place. It made his heart bleed when he had thus wasted his honest earnings, and felt tempted to make free with his employer's drawer in order to procure means to continue the fascinating game. It inflicted a deeper wound, when his losses tempted him to make larger abstractions with less and less prospect of replacing what he had taken ; but he went on, grew desperate, resorted to false entries to conceal his guilt. Often his conscience tortured him, and shame and confusion worried him, as he anticipated the day of disclosure and ruin, but on he went, until the fearful result broke upon him and overwhelmed him with infamy. I shall not undertake to describe the agony of that mother's heart when the sad tidings reached her ear. Poor

woman, she never smiled again. Grief, like a worm in the bud, gnawed at her heart and she lingered until the grave closed up her earthly history. I cannot describe how that father felt whose fond hopes were so blasted. Nor can I describe the exercises of that sister, in regard to whose love there is not on earth a purer thing. Poor girl, she wept as if her very heart would break. Ah! what a dark cloud has gathered over that once happy household by the conduct of that misguided son and brother.

But sometimes it is the husband who yields to this insnaring and destructive habit. He begins to be out late at night, and the heart of the wife is full of anxiety. When he returns, he excuses himself as best he may, and resolves, it may be, that he will not distress her so any more. But again he is ensnared, and again the wife is distressed. She has her suspicions aroused, but she chokes them down. She is slow to believe that any thing criminal is practiced—but the manner of her husband is not what it once was. Time rolls on, and the whole truth comes out at length. She is beggared. Her property, that she brought as her inheritance, is squandered, her children are destitute, her husband, overwhelmed with shame, put an end to his life, or disappeared, gone, no one knows whither.

I remember of reading the history of a gambler that made a deep impression on my mind. He

was of respectable parentage, and was sent to the city of New York to obtain a business education. He was introduced into the parlors of the wealthy, in which the company often amused themselves with playing cards. He was often asked to join in the the play, and felt a little mortified that he was ignorant of the game. He gave his attention to it however, and soon learned to play. This was his first step to ruin. Next we find him wending his way to the west, and on the steamboat he was solicited to take a hand. He did so, as they were only playing for amusement, and he expected to go no farther. Thus they continued for awhile; but as the spirits of the party began to flag, they proposed as a means of exciting deeper interest in the game, to stake something. Gradually the stakes were increased. The result was, the young man lost his all. Ashamed to inform his friends of his situation, he found means to work his way to one of our large cities, and there he was soon arrested for attempting to pass counterfeit money. He was brought into court, tried and sent to the penitentiary.

Where was that young man ruined? Not when he received the sentence confining him to the gloomy walls of the prison—not when the officers of the law arrested him—not when the evidence of his guilt led to his apprehension—not when, upon the steamboat, the gamblers fleeced him of the means of his support—not when he

consented to take a hand with the heartless blacklegs that infest our rivers, and exert their ingenuity to entrap the unwary. The fatal blow was given in the parlors of New York, where beauty and wit were wont to assemble. There his morals received a stab that sent him lingering to the abodes of crime and wretchedness.

O, ye gay and beautiful, ye maidens who form the charm of parlor circles, are ye indeed the thoughtless ones who present the poisoned chalice, the effects of which dry up the fountains of virtue and happiness? Take care. Like the eagle whose heart was pierced by an arrow steadied by a pinion taken from its own wing, you may find one day that you planted the thorn which shall pierce your own soul, that you started the influence which in its dreadful sweep has made your own heart a desolation. Do not, we entreat you, thus cast fire brands, arrows and death, and say you are only in sport. Do not allure the unwary into the snare by which he is robbed of all that makes life a blessing.

And you, young man, beware of the beginning. It is like the letting out of water—like a seep in the dam. First, the trickling drop. What injury can that do? Gradually it increases to a little stream—then, wearing its way, it enlarges and strengthens until it opens a mighty gap, and the rushing torrent carries desolation in all its course. Do not admit the torpid adder into your house

lest, warmed into life and vigor, its sting be the death of those you fondly love.

My young friend, you have no right to indulge in food that poisons your body, enfeebles your constitution and sends you through life a sickly, wretched man. You have no right to peril your reason by vainly endeavoring to pry into things which God has wisely commanded you not to meddle with. You have no right to jeopardize your property, the comfort of your parents, and all your own hopes of usefulness, in vain amusement. Hear the voice of warning as it comes from the breaking hearts of fond friends and those whose love is the most precious of all earth's treasures, and determine, God helping you, you will never place yourself within the charmed circle. Remember, it is enchanted ground.

Remember "there is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Look narrowly and closely at the principles and tendencies of all your exercises, and be sure that you are right. Remember 'that as righteousness tendeth to life, so he that pursueth evil, pursueth it to his own death.' 'In all thy ways acknowledge God and he shall direct thy steps.' 'Godliness is profitable for all things, having the promise both of this life and of that which is to come.'

SERMONS

BY

DR. COULTER.

I.

Mark xvi : 15—"And He said unto them,Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

ONE of the special hindrances to social and general happines is selfishness. Men seek their own advantage with too little regard to the well-being of others. To this source doubtless may be traced much of the bickerings of families, the contentions of neighbors—their lawsuits and slanderous accusations. Hence, arise the strifes of communities and the difficulties that afflict churches. Diotrephes loveth to have the pre-eminence. To this principle may often be traced those terrible conflicts, by which nations are embroiled and distracted. Whatever therefore tends to foster selfishness should be diligently avoided. And this requires early attention. The seeds of it are often sown in childhood, in the nursery, and cultivated by parental fondness, little thinking they are thus preparing their children and themselves bitterness in the latter end. If this be so, it is evident that whatever is suited to check the growth, and deaden the power of selfishness should be carefully cultivated. The judicious parent will strive to nip it in the bud. He will labor to have his children

trained to habits of self-denial for the good of others, their brothers, sisters, and associates. 'To do good and communicate, forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased,' saith Holy Scripture. "Look not every man on his own things but every man also on the things of others." The great Gospel motto is "glory to God in the highest and good will to men."

It is of great importance to the young that they take a right start in the matter. They should feel that they have a place in this world for something higher and holier than to pamper their own appetites, or to gratify their own pride or ambition. Their aim should be to leave the world better and happier for their having lived in it. They should feel, that to confer happiness and comfort is better than to receive it. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." It is more Godlike.

It is said that he is to be regarded as a public benefactor who makes two spires of grass grow where but one grew before. More so, he who converts an impassable bog into a smiling meadow, a wild jungle into cultivated fields of corn, and barren hills to fruitful vineyards, that makes a desolated country a place of thriving orchards, blooming gardens, and happy homes. These things pertain to physical comfort, and are well in their place. Is not he a public benefactor who dries up the tear of the widow and orphan by administering to their necessities—who seeks out the children

of ignorance, and sorrow and crime, and leads their feet in the paths of knowledge, virtue and peace? Howard made it the business of his life to visit the prisoner in his dungeon and cell, and to try to do him good.

It would indeed be a goodly sight to contemplate, could we behold a band of youth in the fullness of their vigor, all deeply imbued with the high and holy purpose to live for the good of their fellow men—determined to dare and do what in them lay to dry up the fountains of sorrow and affliction, to smooth the pathway of the poor and unfortunate, to be eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, to cause the widow's heart to sing for joy, to stay the tide of intemperance and crime, and live bright examples of purity, friendship and love.

Blessed be God, this sin-darkened and ruined world has been blest with some such, and we may hope that the race will never entirely die out in the land, until millennial glory shall cheer every dark waste "and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Well, my dear friend, if you are a Christian, you feel and know that the Gospel is the only remedy which can meet the wants of a dying world. Without this, death must forever rage and reign. This alone can cure the disorders of your heart, make your present life a blessing, and give you an assured hope of happiness hereafter.

Without it, there can be no real and lasting enjoyment in any relation. Without it, families as well as individuals must ever remain in a deplorable condition. The wrath of God abideth on them. They await the day of fearful reckoning and utter ruin. So it is with communities; so also with nations. No government can prove a real and lasting blessing unless its principles are imbued with the spirit of the Gospel. "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee," says the Prophet Isaiah, speaking of the Church of God—"shall perish, yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." The wicked shall be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God.

If you are a patriot and a person of information and consideration, you know that without the Gospel, no country can be truly prosperous and happy. Your own reflections under the light of history coincide with the declaration of inspiration that "righteousness exalteth a nation"—that "blessed is the people who know the joyful sound." Blessed is the people whose hearts and institutions are pervaded with the Spirit of the Gospel.

If you are a philanthropist, and have observed and reflected upon the evils which afflict humanity, and the various remedies which have been prescribed and tried for its relief, you must be aware that nothing at all meets the necessity but the Gospel.

Whether therefore you be truly a Christian, a patriot or a philanthropist, you must feel that the Gospel, in its living and all-pervading influence, is the want of the world.

You are not surprised therefore, if you know anything about the history of the blessed Jesus, that He should give, under circumstances of the most impressive character, the command of the text. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." It comports with the whole history of His life. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came with the gracious remedy for all human ills, individual, domestic, social, civil, national. It is found in the Gospel.

It comports with all that is written of Him in the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets.

He was promised as that seed of Abraham in whom all nations of the earth should be blessed. Hence, says the Apostle—"The Scriptures foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, "in Thee shall all nations be blessed." Hence it was said by the Prophet in reference to Christ, "Look unto Me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and besides Me there is no Savior." And again "The grace of God hath appeared unto all men." Hence it is said in reference to the spread of the Gospel, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established

in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, 'come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His ways. And we will walk in His paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.' And He shall judge among the nations—and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

And again, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them, and the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the sucking child shall play upon the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand upon the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

And still again, "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, saith the Lord." These are glowing prophe-

cies of Isaiah, the evangelical prophet, relating to the coming results of the spread and power of the Gospel. It is indeed the great panacea for the world's disorders. It alone can bring peace and blessing here and hereafter. No wonder then that the blessed Savior bade His disciples go everywhere and proclaim it. Go, scale every mountain, penetrate every valley, visit every island and continent, and leave no dark spot in the whole world uncheered by the blessed light of the glorious Gospel of the Son of God.

It is moreover characteristic of the Gospel to lead all who heartily receive it, todesire its propagation, and find their highest enjoyment in laboring to promote it. It is a great Gospel maxim, as already intimated that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." It is a blessedness of a higher and purer character. Hence, those who do most for the spread of the Gospel in a right spirit, are the happiest people. The requisitions of the Gospel impose no slavish service. He that serves God in the spirit of the Gospel of His Son, belongs to the highest order of freemen. The service is one of choice.

No wonder the blessed Savior—fresh from His great work on earth—for man's salvation—full of love to the world, and especially to His people—should say, "Go ye into all the world," unto every people, to every clime, to every creature. The Gospel presents blessings suited to every human being on earth.

To the seeker for riches, it offers treasures more precious than gold, yea, than much fine gold, of durable riches and righteousness. It tells of a treasure "incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away": of treasures laid up in heaven, which neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and which thieves do not break through and steal."

To the poor, it speaks of faith, and tells them that, though poor in this world, yet may they be rich in faith, and heirs of the grace of eternal life. To the seeker of pleasure, it speaks of "a joy unspeakable and full of glory—of fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore." To the bond, it speaks of freedom that is full of blessedness, giving inward peace, so that a prison becomes a palace. To all, it says, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things"—all necessary things—"shall be added unto you." "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life which now is and of that which is to come."

Go ye, said the Savior. In obedience to this command the apostles went forth. Peter is said to have gone as far as Babylon; others penetrated even to India; some into Egypt, and far into Africa; others to Scythia. The apostle Paul tells us that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illysicum, he had fully preached the Gospel.

The apostles died. Having served their generation by the will of God faithfully, they were taken up higher. They were men valiant for the

truth, and counted not their own lives dear unto them in comparison of the blessed privilege of testifying the Gospel of the grace of God, not shunning to seal their testimony with their own blood.

Still the command of the Savior lived and found an echo in the hearts of the people.

"Salvation, oh salvation,
The joyful sound proclaim."

The Gospel, as the great blessing of heaven for ruined man, was presented farther and wider. Men imbued with the grace of God went forth into regions wholly devoted to idolatry, and there preached the blessed Gospel.

"As much as in me lies," said the apostle Paul, "I am ready to preach the Gospel to you which are in Rome also, for I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation." Others, when he was gone, took up the message in the same spirit. But the conflict was terrible. For three hundred years the storms of furious opposition beat upon their heads. The fires of ten persecutions, fierce and bloody, raged around them. Hundred and thousands died the martyr's death, and went to wear the martyr's crown. "They were stoned—they were sawn assunder—they wandered about in sheep-skins, and in goat-skins, in dens and caves of the earth—destitute, afflicted and tormented." At length, the great principle of the Gospel pervaded the Roman empire. The ancient

idolatry tottered and fell, and Christianity ascended the throne of the Cæsars.

But time would fail us to detail the history of the Church from Constantine to Charlemagne, and from Charlemagne to the Reformation, or from the Reformation until now. It is a varied history, but still one of progress. Jesus Christ, the great Captain of salvation, upon the White Horse, indicating triumph, goes forth conquering and to conquer.

Sometimes indeed superstition consuming the vitals of godliness seemed to sit like a fearful vampire upon the very heart of the Church, and she seemed to sleep the sleep of death. Again, light would seem to flame out upon her altars, startling the nations and calling them to receive Gospel blessings. Those were centuries of gloom with only occasional rays of true Gospel light.

But still the voice of God concerning His Church as read in all history was "destroy it not, for there is a blessing in it." There were the Culdees of Scotland, in the sixth century; the Waldenses of the South of France, dating back, according to some, as early as the third or fourth century; and later on were the Wickliffites and Hussites, still laboring to hold up the Gospel by example and precept in its purity and power, as the great want of ruined man. Many also in the Romish communion, struggled to clear away the rubbish of superstition, dig out the pure gold of the Gospel, and set it forth in its original precious-

ness as heaven's most blessed gift to men. At length the morning of the Reformation broke in upon the dark night of Popery. Zwingle, Luther, Calvin, Knox, Cranmer, and a host of others, like Gideon and his immortal three hundred, having broken their pitchers, and holding their lamps in their hands, shed forth a great light over the land. The people which sat in darkness saw a great light and to those in the region and shadow of death, light sprang up. God's people feeling their fewness and feebleness, went forth in the strength of the Lord—holding up the light, and blowing the trumpet of a purified Gospel. The weapons of their warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of superstition and error. The doctrine of justification by faith in Christ alone, was the battle cry of the Reformers, and carried dismay and discomfiture into the hosts of their enemies. The sword of the Lord and of Gideon, or the duty of man and his dependence upon God, was the principle upon which they went forth to the work before them. Oh, it was a blessed day and a blessed work, and many of earth's weary children received the rest of Gospel deliverance.

Still the voice of the Savior came with tenderness and power, "Go ye into all the world." Fourteen missionaries from Geneva set out for the South American Indians about the middle of the sixteenth century. Sweden also sent a missionary

to Lapland. In the seventeenth century, the Church of Holland sent missionaries to the Island of Ceylon. The Non-conformists of New England sent missionaries also to the neighboring Indians. Here labored Eliot, called the Apostle to the Indians, into whose language he translated the Bible, which was printed about sixteen hundred and sixty-three. After him came the Mayhews, and in the next century the Brainerds — names illustrious and venerable and worthy to be held in everlasting remembrance. These all rejoiced to present the Gospel to the heathen, to preach Christ where He had not yet been named, as the great cordial and water of life to fainting, dying men.

The eighteenth century was marked by an increase of the spirit of missions. Many went from Denmark to India and to Greenland: prominent among the former was Swartz, among the latter Engede.

The nineteenth century is more especially distinguished by manifestations of the missionary spirit, both in this country and Europe. In 1810 was formed the A. B. C. F. Missions. Active in bringing this about was a band of young men, among whom a leading spirit was Samuel Mills— who one day said, "we are but little men, yet our influence may be felt on the other side of the globe." They were instrumental in setting a train of means in operation that has been, and is now felt for good in all parts of the world. The labors

of men connected with this Board are so widely extended that upon them the sun never sets. In 1831, was formed the W. B. F. Missions, which was transferred to the General Assembly in 1837. Besides these, and dating at different periods, are the organizations of almost all evangelical denominations, both in this country and Europe—Episcopal, Baptist, and Methodist. The Lord gave the word, and great is the company who publish it. The missionaries to the heathen may now be counted by thousands, and their converts by tens of thousands.

Still the cry of the blessed Savior sounds from His word tenderly and lovingly, "Go, go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Notwithstanding all that is done, much remains yet to do. The population of the world is now reckoned by some to be near thirteen hundred million. Of these, if you sum up all that have the name of Christian, Protestants, Roman Catholics, and the Greek Church, they amount to only about three hundred and twenty-five millions, leaving over nine hundred millions still in the darkness of heathenism and Mohammedanism. "The harvest is great but the laborers are few.

And here I remark. It is a great work. It is great if we consider its origin. Like the baptism of John, it is from heaven. It originated in the deep counsels of eternity. It was developed in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension,

and intercession of Jesus Christ. It is developed in the continual agency of the Holy Spirit. Behold a world in ruins, and a mission fitted out in heaven for its redemption. It is a great work if we consider its effects. The Gospel is the great source of blessing, causing "the wilderness and solitary places to be glad, and making the desert to bud and blossom as the rose." Every human institution, domestic, social, and civil, awakens to new life and blessing under its benign influence. It is a great work, conferring blessings in time and in eternity. I remark, secondly,

It is an arduous work, "I must work said the Savior while it is day." For this He spent whole nights in prayer. For this He went about day after day with such zeal and activity that some were ready to say, "He is beside Himself." The zeal for the house of God consumed His life. For this He hungered and thirsted, and toiled on amid reproach, and reviling, and scorn and mockery. For this He agonized until His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. For this He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheek to them that plucked off the hair. For this He yielded Himself to crucifixion and desertion and death. Ah, to Him it was an arduous work. And still the work is arduous. It has cost many a painful separation, many a day of anxiety and weariness, many a bitter tear, many a dollar, many a precious life. This the Savior

knew and yet He said, "Go"—and this He still knows, and still the command remains—"Go."

It is a work arduous and self-denying and self-sacrificing.

I remark again: It is a faith-exercising work. The missionary may go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, and sowing beside all waters, and years may roll on before the gathering of any fruit. He must walk by faith and not by sight. "So you expect to convert the heathen," said one rather patronizingly to a missionary,—"No," was the prompt reply, "I expect God will." Oftentimes it has seemed to the missionary that he labored in vain and spent his strength for naught. Sixteen years did the missionary labor in Tahiti before he could number a single convert. Sixteen years did the missionary labor in Siberia among the Buvats, when, for the first time, evidence was afforded that one, a youth of seventeen, was born again.

It is a faith-exercising work.

I remark, also: It is a personal work—"Go *ye*." It is true all do not do the same part of the work. It is like building the house of worship at home. From one place food is obtained for the workmen. From another come the rock and the sand and lime; from another the brick, and from another the timber, and all by the money furnished for the purpose. Just so in this work, every one may do something. "Go *ye*." "We are going down into the mine," said Carey, "but we look to you to

hold the ropes." The missionary ventures into the dark and dangerous mine of heathenism, and commences his work upon the rock. Can it be broken? Will it ever yield streams of penitence and love? Smite it with the rod of Gospel truth, and see that ye become not weary. Duty is ours; results are God's.

II.

John ii: 23—"Many believed in His name when they saw the miracles which He did."

JESUS CHRIST is here presented as the performer of miracles, and the statement of the result is set forth, as the conviction of many of the truth of His Messiahship. It is a blessed truth, that we are not left without clear and strong evidences, that the Gospel of our salvation is not a cunningly devised fable. Its reality, as a divine communication, was attended by signs, suited to satisfy every reasonable and reflecting mind. Hence, the salutation of Nicodemus to Christ, "was, we know that Thou art a Teacher come from God, for no can do these miracles which Thou doest except God be with him."

It is the purpose of this discourse, to consider the miracles of the Bible, as evidences of the divine authority of its teachings.

But what is a miracle? It has been defined as a suspension or violation of the law of nature. By a law of nature, we understand the way in which the great First and ever-efficient cause uniformly acts. Some content themselves with saying, that a miracle is a supernatural event. Others call

it a deviation from the course of nature. It is, says one, a sign, obvious to the senses, that God has interposed His power, to control the established course of nature. Perhaps it is better to say, a miracle is a work effected in a manner unusual, or different from the common and regular method of Providence, by the power of God Himself, for the proof of some particular message, or in attestation of the author ity of some particular divine messenger.

"Nothing," says one, "should be construed as a miracle, but what is, in the first place, definitely, distinctly, and evidently perceived by the senses; in the second place, clear, and intelligible to the understanding; and in the third place, manifestly inconsistent with the established order of nature; and therefore impossible to be accounted for, without supposing that God has interposed to control the law of nature."

God, for wise purposes, has established an order in the universe, which we term the law of nature. There is an order of nature in the elements. Fire will burn wood. A man cast into a fiery furnace, will be consumed. Water will seek its level. Now, if a bush be seen enveloped in a flame, and yet not burned, if men be cast into a flaming furnace, and yet not consumed, it is a miracle. So, if water stand up, as a wall, on either side, and leave a path through the midst of the sea, it is a miracle, and marks the interposition of a power controlling the established law of nature.

There is a natural order in the movements of the solar system. Hence, if at the word of a man, it stands still for the space of a day, or if the shadow on the dial plate turn back fifteen degrees, or one, it is a miracle, and shows the interposition of a power, controlling the established order of nature.

There is an established order in the animal economy. We need daily food. We are subject to diseases, which, in the order of nature, cannot be healed but by slow degrees, and some of them are confessedly beyond the reach of human skill. We are tending to death, and when death has done its work, we live no more in this world. Hence, if a man live for weeks in health, without food ; if diseases of long standing and malignant type, be healed in a moment, by a word or touch ; if a man, dead, and buried for four days, or one, rises to life, by a word, it is a miracle, and shows the interposition of a power controlling the order of nature.

There is an order of nature in reference to mind, and if mind becomes deranged, it ordinarily requires a considerable time for complete restoration. If, therefore, the raging maniac is restored to his right mind by a word, it is evidence of the interposition of a power controlling the ordinary course, or law of nature.

As God is the author of nature, and of the law by which it is regulated, it would seem reasonable to say, that every true miracle must be by divine efficiency, or divine permission, and this is, no

doubt, correct. It may, however, with our limited knowledge of the power which God permits to be used, by different orders of creation, be wise in us not to pronounce with too much confidence upon this matter.

It may be that the prince of the power of the air may be permitted to control to some extent, the law of nature. God permitted him in the case of Job, it would seem, for the time, to direct the lightning to destroy his sheep, the wind to overturn the house where his children were assembled, as well as to instigate the Sabeans and the Chaldeans to take away his cattle and camels, and even to put forth his hand terribly, to afflict his body and to disturb with frightful dreams his repose. These things, it is true, were not a suspension, or violation, of the law of nature, or, even strictly a deviation, and therefore, not really miraculous; but a use of nature and control of its laws for his own malicious purpose.

We know, moreover, that the magicians of Pharaoh, withstood Moses, for a time, with their enchantments, but, at length, came to an end of their power, and were constrained to acknowledge the presence and power of God, saying, "this is the finger of God," as distinguished from their efforts. We find, moreover, that there were witches and wizzards, in ancient times, who were accounted dangerous to dwell among God's people. Heathen nations, and the corrupt Church of Rome have

also claimed to perform miracles. Whether these have been in every case impositions of cunning, and wicked men merely, and all lying wonders, or whether diabolical agency has been permitted, by the righteous judgment of God, to lead minds, wilfully obstinate, astray, by means of miraculous performances, we will not attempt to determine. One thing is certain, Satan can go no further than God permits.

We may rest assured, further, that God is able to work miracles, and to accompany them with such evidences as to satisfy any reasonable man that they are from Himself. But what we here assume as a possibility, is a well sustained fact.

The miracles recorded in the Bible, as wrought by divine power, were performed under circumstances exceedingly well calculated to test their reality. They were wrought in public, in the presence of multitudes of people, both friends and foes, and in open day. Moses wrought miracles, by the power of God, in the presence of Pharoah and his servants, and of such a character as affected the whole land, and made all the dwellers therein witnesses. The terrible plagues which affected that whole country, were facts that were widely spread, and became known to the surrounding nations. The miracles wrought by Elijah and Elisha, and other prophets of the Lord, in His name, were seen and known by multitudes, under circumstances that made deception morally impos-

sible. So, also, the miraculous interposition of the Most High, to deliver His servants from the fiery furnace and the lion's den, in Babylon, was under circumstances that admitted of no possibility of mistake.

It could not be otherwise than as appeared. But more especially is this position verified in the miracles recorded in the New Testament. Great multitudes followed the Savior, and witnessed the healing of the sick, the giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, causing the lame to walk, the maimed to be whole, and the dead to live. Many of these were known by large numbers to have been blind from their birth, impotent from the womb, or diseased for a long time. And there were not wanting enemies, exceedingly desirous to find fault, and, if possible, to prove Him a deceiver. There were the Pharisees, smarting under His solemn, severe, and repeated rebukes, and ever desiring to find occasion to disparage His works. There were the Sadducees, also, with the Herodians, eager to entangle Him, and ready to proclaim any deception they could discover. There were the Priests and Scribes, bitter in their opposition to Christ, and yet, when meeting together, constrained to say, "this man doeth many wonderful works."

The miracles wrought by the Apostles, in the name of Christ, were performed under similar circumstances. Their enemies were constrained to

acknowledge the performance of notable miracles, through their instrumentality.

Such circumstances of proof, in regard to the miracles recorded in the Bible, are, in many respects, peculiar. They are not found in those claimed by opposers. These last lack the publicity, the multitudes of witnesses, the severe scrutiny of enemies.

The miracles claimed in support of Christianity, differ from others as to their actors. The life of Jesus proclaimed Him holy, harmless, and free from guile. When brought before a Roman tribunal, by accusers thirsting for His blood and exerting all their ingenuity to secure a verdict condemning Him, they could obtain from the officer, although desirous of favoring them, no other sentence than, "I find no fault in this man."

The Apostles and their co-laborers were men who could testify that they had lived in all good conscience before God, and honestly before men. Many of them, during much of their lives, had been strong opposers of the Christian religion, but became convinced that they were wrong, and spent their after life in laboring to build up that which before they had endeavored to destroy. This was pre-eminently the case with the Apostle Paul, who, before, was a fierce persecutor, but became a most zealous and faithful minister of the Gospel. For this, he counted all things else but loss. Whatever of time, or labor, or talent, or substance was

spent in the promotion of any cause, not in some way subservient to this great object, he considered as thrown away. "God forbid," said he, "that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

With Paul were associated many others, who counted not their own lives dear unto them, that they might glorify God, in laboring to promote the best interests of their fellow men. The actors in the performance of miracles have left behind them a record of character, marked by as pure a philanthropy, as strict an integrity, as clear an understanding, as spotless a life, as devoted a piety, in short, for all, that characterizes truth to God and man, as history can give. If there is truth and honesty, capable of proof anywhere in all history, it is here. If, in any case, the character of the actors places the things done above reproach and beyond suspicion, it is in this. There is no transaction in the annals of the past, that has a better claim upon our entire confidence, viewed in connection with the actors, than the performance of the miracles recorded in the Bible, given as testimony of the truth of their claim that they were messengers sent with a message from God.

The miracles performed in support of Christianity, differ from others, in their character. "No man," said Nicodemus, the Jewish ruler, to Christ, "can do *these* miracles which Thou doest, except

God be with him." Whatever prodigies others might perform, they must pale into insignificance, when compared with the miracles of Christ. There were a greatness and a grandeur about them that found their equal in the performance of no mere man, as the production of his own power or skill. In the history of the miracles performed by Moses, as we have seen, there arrived a period when the magicians of Egypt were constrained to say, "this is nothing less than the finger of God." In the court of Babylon, events occurred, in connection with the servants of God, that showed them to be superior to all the magicians, astrologers, and soothsayers of the whole realm. They were the subjects of deliverances, that constrained proud, idolatrous kings to say, "There is no god that can deliver after this sort but your God."

Such, too, was the character of the miracles of the New Testament. They constrained the common people to pronounce in favor of Him who wrought them. While some said of Jesus, "He is mad, and hath a devil, why hear ye Him?" others as quickly replied, "These are not the words of Him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of one that was born blind?" "The works that I do," said the Savior, "bear witness of me." Christ, by His word, raised the dead four days buried, to life; stilled the raging of the tempest, and restored to health and a sound mind, the distracted maniac.

The miracles of the Apostles, also wrought in the name of Christ, were noted miracles. They were such as constrained the multitude to acknowledge that God was with them. Those who had been crippled from their birth, "leaped, and walked, and praised God."

The character of the best attested miracles of heathen or Romish boast, in comparison with those detailed in the Word of God, are as the frenzied ravings of diabolical madness compared to the utterances of heavenly wisdom.

Says a writer upon this subject, "the pretended miracles, mentioned by pagan historians and poets, were not even pretended to have been publicly wrought, to enforce the truths of a new religion contrary to the reigning idolatry. Many of them may be clearly shown to have been mere natural events; others of them are represented as having been performed in secret, on the most trivial occasion, and in obscure and fabulous ages, long prior to the era of the writers by whom they are recorded; and such of them as, upon first view, appear to be best attested, are evidently tricks contrived for interested purposes, to flatter power, or to promote the prevailing superstition."

As to the miracles of the Romish Church, it is evident, as Dr. Doddridge observes, "that many of them were ridiculous tales, according to their own historians; others were performed

without any credible witnesses, or in circumstances when the performer had the greatest opportunity for juggling, and it is particularly remarkable that they were hardly ever wrought where they seem most necessary, that is, in countries where those doctrines are renounced which that Church esteems of the highest importance."

There is a difference in the miracles of the Bible, wrought in attestation of its teachings, from every other, in regard to their object. The object of alleged heathen miracles, has uniformly been of a selfish or unimportant character. Such as the glorification of an emperor, or prince, the selection of a site for a city, or to invest with a sacred importance, a tree, or hill, or stream, a spot of ground, or some such matter. So, also, of those of which the Romish Church has boasted so much. The object has been to give importance to the grave of a devotee to their system: to secure reverence for a piece of wood, in the shape of a cross, or for the relics and bones of men, claimed to have been saints, or for the securing veneration for particular churches, or for giving a fictitious value to bodily exercises, flagellations, fastings, and mortifications of various kinds.

But when we turn to the miracles claimed to have been wrought by the servants of God, as recorded in the Bible, there is seen a worthy object. It is that men may see and know that the God of

heaven speaks to them, on subjects of the greatest importance. Moses was sent on an important errand to the nation of Israel, by their covenant-keeping God. The law came by Moses, and it was important that it should be known, by infallable signs, to have come from God. Christ and His Apostles wrought miracles. Christ, in His own name, and the disciples, in the name of their Master. Through them, came the Gospel of salvation, through faith in a Savior already come, and it was important that it should be proclaimed unto the world, attended with such signs as were sufficient to satisfy every reasonable man that it was a message from God. The object was surely sufficient to justify the use of miracles. It involved interests, the highest and dearest to man, even his well-being here, and hereafter. It presented the greatest manifestation of God's glory ever presented to man, or, so far as we can conceive, to the universe.

Here, then, we see that the object of the miracles wrought by the Savior and the servants of God, are as far superior to that of other alleged miracles, as we can well conceive. The one is earthly, low, and grovelling; the other, glorious, and holy, and worthy the interposition of a divine power, to control and, for the time, to change the established order of nature.

We remark again: the testimony which establishes the miracles of the Christian religion, is of

the strongest character. The witnesses who report, saw them with their own eyes. "That which we have seen and heard," say they, "declare we unto you." Many of them were conversant with those upon whom the miracles were performed, both before and after. Some of them were upon the lake when the storm arose, heard the howling of the tempest, saw the billows rise in towering heights, marked their foaming crests, and felt the dashing spray. They felt the quivering of their frail bark, as it hung upon the mountain wave, and heard the sound of the creaking timbers, as it plunged into the yawning gulf below. They felt the danger, and cried out in wild terror to their sleeping Master, "Carest Thou not that we perish?" They saw the form of the blessed Savior, as in mild majesty He arose, and stood upon the laboring vessel, and, looking out upon the wild grandeur of the tempest, said, "Peace, be still: they saw, at His bidding, the billows fall in calm repose, felt that the winds were still, and realized that their boat was gliding quietly upon the placid surface, to the shore. Could they have been mistaken? Certainly not.

They saw, too, the wild maniac, as he was brought to the Master. They marked the eye, restless and rolling; they looked upon the laboring brow, the emaciated cheek, and the haggard countenance; they saw his dreadful contortions, as every muscle swelled in agony and every nerve tightened until it became rigid in the violence of the

struggle; they saw his wallowing, and foaming, until nature seemed to give way, and he lay as one dead. They heard the Master's voice, as He spake the healing word, and saw the eye beam with a calm and healthful joy, the cloud pass from the anxious brow, light and peace pervade the haggard countenance. They saw him, clothed and in his right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus, with listening ear, and upturned eye, and countenance all glowing with intelligence, gratitude and love. Could they have been deceived? He was thus seen by opposers and friends. There was no room for mistake.

Moreover, the testimony they bore to the truth of miracles, was borne in the midst of much opposition. It was coupled with the doctrine of salvation to dying men, through faith in a crucified Savior, to the Jew, a stumbling block, to the Greeks, foolishness. They turned away from the message, and labored to silence the messenger, while He assured them, with solemn earnestness, that, if they received it not, they must be lost forever.

They scoffed and raged, and often laid violent hands upon the witness for Jesus and the resurrection, and subjected him to scourging and stoning, even unto death. Still he was faithful unto the last extremity, and even rejoiced to seal his testimony with all he held dear in life, and even with life itself. These things stand on record, and have

come down unto us by such a line of transmission as to satisfy every reasonable doubt in regard to their authenticity. They were written by those who were eye-witnesses. They were circulated among those who had seen and heard them. They are quoted by writers contemporary, and immediately subsequent. They are without contradiction. Even opposers, who wrote about that time, allude to them, as matters of fact, in regard to which there was no question. The chain of evidence that goes to sustain the position that the record of miracles, of which we have been speaking, was made by those who saw and heard them, is as complete as can be found in relation to any event in history. And, moreover, the evidence that goes to sustain the credibility of the witnesses themselves, is more full and reliable than can be produced for the witnesses of any facts of that period.

But we ought, perhaps, to notice an infidel argument against the truths of miracles.

It is said that experience is the foundation of belief, and that our experience testifies that the laws of nature are uniform in their operation; but a miracle implies that the laws of nature have not been absolutely uniform. Now, if we have never experienced a miracle ourselves, or had the evidence of its occurrence through our own senses, we can have no other proof of their occurrence than the testimony of others. It is said that our experience in regard to testimony is, that it often

deceives. Here, then, is the infidel's position. My experience of nature is, that her laws are uniform. My experience of testimony is, that it is often false. Here, then, I have the voice of nature and the voice of testimony. The utterances of nature, so far as I have seen, have always been in accordance with her established laws, while the utterances of testimony have not always accorded with truth. I am told that a miracle has taken place; in other words, that the utterances of nature have varied, and thus, has been different from what I have seen or known. What evidence have I that this is true? I have only testimony which I know has often uttered falsehood. Here, then, says the infidel, I have my experience of nature, in opposition to my experience of testimony. My experience of nature says, no miracle has occurred. Testimony affirms that it has. Shall I believe my experience, that nature has never varied, or shall I believe testimony, which tells me that it has, when I know that testimony often varies from the truth? The test, says the infidel, is between a witness that I have never known to vary, and one that I have; and I am bound to believe the one I have never known to vary. Miracles, then, says he, cannot be established by testimony. I think I have given the argument in its full force.

There is undoubtedly a fallacy in this infidel argument. In the first place, it assumes that because nature has not varied from her established

order, under one's own observation, therefore, it has never varied under the observation of any one else. This is begging the question, or assuming the very thing in dispute. If nature has never varied, then, of course, there has never been a miracle, and the question is settled. The position, however, is, that miracles have occurred. It is arguing little to the purpose to say, I have never seen it, and therefore, it cannot be true. Surely, the Author of nature may, for important reasons, have caused it to vary, for the purpose of giving testimony to the truth of an important message, sent by Him to His creature man, without bringing every individual man, woman, and child to witness it. The thing is neither impossible nor unreasonable. Our experience, then, or immediate observation of the utterances of nature, is no proof that miracles, or variations from her uniform law, have never occurred.

But the principal fallacy lies in the assumption in regard to testimony, namely, the assigning to all testimony what is true only of a part. Because testimony, as a whole, has not been absolutely and universally true, therefore, the infidel argues, every part of it, or at least, the part of it relating to miracles, must be untrue. Now, because testimony, under some circumstances, has proved unreliable, surely, it does not follow that, under no circumstances, is it to be believed. There may be testimony so varied and extensive, and under such

circumstances, and all so tending to one point, all so going to establish the same proposition, as that to doubt it, is morally impossible. Much of testimony may be false, and yet not all. Surely, all history is not untrue. Surely, there were men who lived, and labored, and died two thousand years ago; but this we only know by testimony. True, says the infidel; but their living, and laboring, and dying was not miraculous. It is the testimony concerning miracles that he refuses. But are not historians as competent to relate one fact as another, the fact of a miracle, as the fact of a natural occurrence, the fact of a darkness over all the land for three hours, when the Savior hung upon the cross, when there could naturally be no eclipse, as the fact of an eclipse, when it naturally did occur.

But the question is concerning testimony sufficient to prove the truth of miracles, and we here say, that testimony, given under certain circumstances, never has proven false. There is such a testimony as never varies from the truth; and we maintain that it is morally impossible that the testimony of the men who testify to the occurrence of miracles, wrought in attestation of the truths of the Bible, should be false. They were men of vigorous understanding, clear perceptions, and manifestly honest. They could not have been deceived themselves, and it is morally impossible that they should have aimed to deceive others.

They declared that they had seen and heard the things whereof they testify. They linked with the truth of their assertions, their dearest hopes for time and eternity. They testified of them in the very place where they said they occurred. They were not denied, even by their most relentless persecutors. "That a noted miracle," said they, on one occasion, "has been done by these men, is manifest, and we cannot deny it." For preaching the doctrines, which they said were proved to be from God, by these miracles, they were often brought before their enemies, and tried, and beaten, and even put to death; but still they never receded from their position, and yet, they knew that, by receding from their position, their lives would be spared and their liberties secured. Still they faltered not. These things were done by a host of witnesses, under the most fearful circumstances of trial. Of this, there can be no reasonable doubt: the record was written at the time, and can be traced up to the date.

That such testimony should be false, is morally impossible. The testimony of such men, under such circumstances, on such a subject, could not be untrue. We may defy the world to show a single example of false testimony, so varied, and extensive, under such a press of circumstances. Thus, we set aside the infidel argument, in relation to testimony. Ignorant men may be deceived—wicked men may testify falsely, but the Apostles

were neither ignorant nor wicked; they could not testify contrary to truth. There is no experience that such a testimony has ever been false. We deny, then, the position that experience proves testimony untrue, applies to this case. The experience is on the other side.

Are the miracles of the Bible true? Does the evidence sustain the assertion? then is the Bible true: its doctrines, its precepts, its promises, its threatenings are all true. They bear the broad seal of Him who is the Author and controller of nature, the Maker of the universe, the holder in His hand of all human destiny.

Are miracles true? Then God's people have much to strengthen their faith. They trust not in the words of man, but in the word of God.

Are miracles true? Then are unbelievers who have opportunity of examining the evidence of their credibility, without excuse. It is not for the want of light; for light upon this subject has come into the world; but it is because they are willingly ignorant, loving darkness rather than light.

The Lord, in mercy bless this effort to set forth an evidence of the truth of His word, and to His name shall be all the glory—amen!

III.

1 Timothy iii : 16—"And, without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

THE word mystery, in general, signifies something hidden or secret. Thus we speak of the conduct of a person as mysterious, when we cannot see the reasons of his or her course of action. Sometimes, also, we speak of an event as full of mystery. The causes which have produced it, or the reasons for their operation are hidden from our view. Sometimes we speak of a mystery as solved, that is, we have now discovered the secret: we now understand the cause or reasons of it. There is more or less mystery in every thing in the world. There is much about the vegetable and mineral world, that we do not fully understand. There is much about our own nature, physically, intellectually and spiritually, that is hidden from us. We are fearfully and wonderfully made.

The mysteries pertaining to religious subjects are regarded as of two classes.

1. Such as, when revealed, we can in some measure comprehend: as, the doctrine of the satisfac-

tion of Christ, forgiveness of sins for the sake of Christ's sufferings and death; the resurrection from the dead, and eternal life in a future world.

2. Such as, being revealed, we know the reality, but cannot comprehend the mode or how they exist. Such as, the doctrine of the Trinity; the doctrine of the two natures, divine and human, in the one person of Christ.

The calling of the Gentiles was a mystery to the ancient prophets and people of God. There was something about the predictions relating to that subject which they could not understand. This mystery was explained in its fulfillment. The union of Christ to His Church is called a mystery, and there is much about that not fully understood even now, but awaits the day when the new Jerusalem shall come down from heaven as a bride adorned for her husband.

"Without controversy," says the text, "great is the mystery of godliness." That is beyond doubt. Among the heathen, in their religious systems, there was much mystery claimed to exist; but, for the most part, it was made up of trick and fraud, the work of cunning craftiness, for the purpose of deception, or the taking advantage of superior knowledge of the working of natural laws, to impose on the ignorant. Their claim to mystery was false and fictitious, yet it was carried to great extent. Hence, we find at Ephesus, where the word of God was mightily blessed, many, who

used curious arts, brought their books together, and burned them before all men, and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. Simon Magus, of Samaria, we are told, for a long time had bewitched the people with his sorceries, to whom they all gave heed, saying, "this man is the great power of God;" but when the Gospel was preached, accompanied with miraculous gifts of God, then Simon's influence faded out. The mysteries of heathenism were pretense and fallacy.

But without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. It is not a cunningly devised fable. By godliness, we understand the principles and effects of the Gospel, founded upon Christ in His mediatorial character, and exhibited in the lives of God's people, or the plan of salvation as experienced and manifested in the hearts and lives of God's children. There is in it much that is hidden from the eyes of the ungodly world, and much not fully comprehended even by the godly. Of some it is said, "the god of this world has blinded their eyes." Hence, says the Apostle, "if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." Both prophets and apostles spake of those whose "hearts were waxed gross, whose ears were dull of hearing, whose eyes were closed lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart and be converted and healed." Hence, the Apostle prays

for the Ephesians, that they may have the spirit of wisdom, and that the eyes of their understanding might be enlightened. Hence, the Savior wept over Jerusalem, saying, "Oh that thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes. Hence, the preaching of the Gospel is to some a savor of death unto death: it is hidden.

The Gospel is hidden from many, as to its power. To the Jews it was a stumbling block, and to the Greeks, foolishness; but unto them that believed, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. Bunyan describes the principle of grace in the heart by a flame which shot up from the side of the wall, stronger and brighter, notwithstanding one was there continually casting upon it water to extinguish it. At this he wondered much, until being conducted to the other side of the wall, he saw one constantly pouring oil upon it. There was a hidden power about it. So it is with the Gospel in its reception in the heart of the man. It has a hidden power moulding the heart after the image of God. Thus, while with "open face beholding the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

It has about it a hidden power, and there is connected with it a hidden blessing. "Eye hath

not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him;" "but God," adds the Apostle, "hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, even the deep things of God."

It is hidden as to its future blessedness. "Beloved," saith the Apostle John, "it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

But this mystery specially gathers around our Lord Jesus Christ, as God-man and our Mediator. In Him are hidden the life and power of godliness. In Him are treasured up the riches of divine grace. It is in this we find the force and preciousness of the text. We purpose to speak of Christ as our Mediator.

I. As to His humiliation: "God was manifested in the flesh."

II. As to the adaptation of His person to meet the claims of justice: "Justified in the Spirit."

III. As an object of interest to angelic intelligences: "Seen of angels."

IV. As enlarging, by His coming, the territory of Gospel invitations: "Preached unto the Gentiles."

V. As to His reception: "Believed on in the world."

VI. As to His exaltation: "Received up into glory."

I. As to the humiliation of Jesus Christ as our Mediator, and the mystery of godliness therein embraced: God was manifested in the flesh, manifested in all the earlier stages of human life: in infancy, the Babe of Bethlehem. We might have supposed that the second Adam would appear as did the first, in all the maturity of His powers, physical and mental. But not so—"Unto us a *child* is born." Jesus increased in stature and wisdom as other members of the human family. He possessed only the infirmities incident to sinless humanity. To these belong not decrepid old age, wrinkled and shrunken and feeble. Had Adam not sinned, years would not have increased the infirmity of his body. His transition from an earthly, to a heavenly state, had been in the full and vigorous maturity of body, soul and spirit, and without a pang. Jesus Christ took upon Himself the nature of man without its sinful infirmities. He hungered and thirsted, and became weary. He ate, drank, and slept, yet was He able to feed thousands in the desert with a few loaves and fishes. He could give living water and endless rest to thirsty, weary souls. He was God manifested in the flesh. He took to Himself a true body and a reasonable soul, "was made in fashion as a man, took upon Him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death." But there was mystery in His birth. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost. There was a mystery

in His wisdom. At twelve years old, He was found in the temple sitting with the doctors of the law, hearing and asking questions, while all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. And as He advanced in years, the witnesses of His works and the listeners to His words, were constrained to say, "whence hath this man this wisdom and these mighty works?" "Is not this the carpenter's son, is not His mother called Mary, and His brethren, are they not all with us? Whence then, hath this man these mighty works?"

There was mystery in the history of His life. He was God manifested in the flesh. As human, He hungered; as divine, He fed five thousand with five loaves and a few fishes. As human, He slept in the boat on the sea of Gallilee, while the storm raged, and the waves dashed furiously around; as God, He said to the tempest, "Peace, be still, and immediately there was a great calm."

There was a mystery in His anguish in the garden, and His agony upon the cross. His death was sooner effected than that of the two thieves crucified with Him. To hasten their death, their legs were broken; but when they came to Jesus, they found Him already dead. He had before said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." He had power to lay down His life, and needed not human devices to hasten its departure.

There was a mystery in His resurrection. He had power to resume the life He laid down, and at the appointed time He broke the bars of death. It was not possible that He should be holden any longer by it. It was astonishing even to His disciples, when they heard that a vision of angels had appeared at His tomb and said that He was risen.

There was a mystery in His ascension. On a bright cloud to heaven He rode. Why should He not remain to carry on His work here? Why should He not remain to encourage by His personal presence His disciples, and subdue His enemies? The mystery of godliness requires that He ascend to His Father and their Father. He goes to intercede on high, to enter with His own blood as our great High Priest into the holiest of all. There is a mystery in all this, a mystery of godliness. It presents the great Mediator as bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh — as one that can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, a sympathising advocate. This is suited to strengthen our faith, inflame our love, and stir up our emotions.

> "Till God in human flesh appear,
> My thoughts no comfort find;
> The holy, just, and sacred three,
> Are terrors to my mind.
> But if Immanuel's face appear,
> My hope, my joy begins."

Yes, here is a mystery of godliness.

II. We notice: The adaptation of the person of the mediator to meet the claims of justice—"Justified in the Spirit."

By the expression justified in the spirit, some think reference is made to the spirit of the converted, or regenerated person. In regeneration the soul is enabled to see how God can be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. To the renewed spirit, the whole plan of salvation involving God the Father's work in sending His only-begotten Son into the world to suffer and die for sinners, and the coming of that Son, as also the employment of the Holy Spirit, is seen to accord with the holiness and justice, as well as the mercy and love of God. The whole plan is seen by the enlightened understanding to be just.

Others think the reference is to the Holy Spirit.

Justified in, and through the work of the Holy Spirit giving His attestation to the justice of the whole plan. By His agency in the miraculous conception, by the unmeasured endowment of the Son with His graces, by His public attestation at His baptism, when He appeared descending as a dove and lighting upon Him, by His attestation in His co-operation in the miracles which attended the Savior's instructions, and especially in His resurrection, when He that had been put to death in the flesh, was quickened by the Spirit,

then He that was manifested in the flesh was justified in the Spirit.

Again. As Christ suffered the punishment of sin, not as a private person, but as our surety; so when, after this suffering, He was raised from the dead, He was therein justified, not as a private person, but as the surety and representative of all that should believe on Him; so that He was raised again, not only for His own, but also for our justification. According to Rom. vi: 25, "Who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification."

Jesus Christ was justified in the Spirit in this sense, by the wonderful effusion of the Holy Spirit in connection with the preaching of the doctrine of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, as manifested on the day of pentecost and on other occasions.

Both of these views are true, but it seems to us they are rather collateral, and not the great truth specially expressed by the phraseology of the text.

Our view is, that justified in the Spirit refers to the divine nature. Manifested in the flesh, in human nature; justified in the Spirit, in the divine nature.

The one sets forth the outward manifestation of the manner of fulfilling the office of Mediator: the other the inward power. The Word of God frequently sets forth the divine and human natures of Christ in connection. One Scripture

saith, "for Christ has also suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us unto God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." Here, I think, flesh and Spirit are expressive of humanity and divinity. Put to death in the flesh, by virtue of, or by reason of humanity; made alive by virtue of His divinity. Again. "Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God, with power by the resurrection from the dead." Here flesh has evidently reference to His humanity, while His resurrection is given as evidence of His divine Sonship, or His divinity. Further, we read, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Here also are set forth humanity and divinity.

Again, the Savior said, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." The life which could be laid down pertained to humanity; the power to lay it down and to take it again, pertained to divinity.

We have in all these passages, flesh, or natural life contrasted with divinity. So I think it is in the text. "Manifested in the flesh" refers to human nature; "justified in the Spirit" refers to the divine nature. He must be divine to justify Him in undertaking as Mediator, the work of man's redemp-

tion. It was needful that the second Adam should be a quickening Spirit, to have life in Himself, to have power to lay down His life and to take it again. A sinless man would have been insufficient; for being wholly a created being, he would need to render unto God his Creator the full exercise of his powers, as a personal duty. He could have no righteousness of obedience to part with for the benefit of others. And especially he could have no power or right to give his life for the guilty. He could not lend his life to satisfy the penalty of the law, and take it back as evidence that the demand was fully met. The sacrifice of the human life of Christ for a time was efficacious, because of its connection in its one person with divinity. The altar sanctified the gift. The offering was human, the altar was divine. The divinity of Christ, then, justified the undertaking to satisfy the claims of divine justice. "Justified in the Spirit."

We might pursue the same course of reasoning to show that an angel could not be justified in undertaking to satisfy the claims of justice in behalf of the guilty. An angel, being a created being, could do nothing more than duty, in obeying. He could have no obedience of righteousness, not needed by himself, to transfer unto others. Neither could he have power or right over his own life, to lend it to death for others. Nor could there be such merit in that act, as to atone for the guilt of a single transgression. Neither angel nor man could

be justified in undertaking to satisfy the claims of divine justice in behalf of others. Jesus Christ, being divine, can alone obtain justification in such an undertaking. "Justified in the Spirit."

Jesus Christ was a suitable Mediator, in view of relation to the Godhead. Says that great thinker, Edwards, "It was not meet the Mediator should be God, the *Father*, because He, in the divine economy of the persons of the Trinity, was the person that holds the rights of the Godhead, and so was the person offended—whose justice required satisfaction; and was to be appeased by a Mediator. It was not meet that it should be the Holy Ghost, for in being Mediator between the Father and the saints, He is in some sense, so between the Father and the Spirit. The saints in all their spiritual transactions with God, act by the Spirit; or rather it is the Spirit of God that acts in them, they are thus the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit dwelling in them is their principle of action in all their transactions with God. But in these, their spiritual transactions with God, they act by a Mediator. These spiritual and holy exercises cannot be acceptable, or avail anything with God, as from a fallen creature, but by a Mediator. Therefore, Christ, in being a Mediator between the Father and the saints, may be said to be Mediator between the Father and the Holy Spirit, that acts in the saints, and therefore it was meet that the Mediator should not be either the Father or the

Spirit; but a middle person between them both. It is the Spirit in the saints that seeks the blessing of God, by faith and prayer, and as the apostle says, with groanings that cannot be uttered. See Rom. viii : 26. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." The Spirit in the saints seeking divine blessing of God, and through a Mediator; and therefore that Mediator must not be the Spirit, but another person. "Justified in the Spirit."

Here, then, is a mystery, and a mystery of godliness. The doctrine of the divinity of Christ is an essential element in the creed of every regenerated soul. Hence, said Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—and hence, exclaimed Thomas, "My Lord, and my God." Take away this, and any system of religion is shorn of its power. It is a mere system of morality, without life, cold and barren.

III. Let us contemplate this Mediator as an object of interest to angelic intelligences. "Seen of angels."

Possibly angels may see in Christ an assurance of their personal and perpetual confirmation in holiness and happiness. Angels had their time of probation. Some left their first estate, while others continued in it, and were secured in their first position. What connection there was with

Christ in this, we do not know. It may be that, having their standing in Him, their interest was increased by witnessing His undertaking in reference to man, or it may be the plan of wisdom, justice and grace, in the salvation of man called forth from angelic intelligences, an intenser feeling of adoring wonder, love and praise. They are so linked to the blessed Savior, that whatever illustrates His glorious attributes, has a corresponding effect upon their blessedness. We are told that, "These things the angels desire to look into." The mystery of redeeming love has an interest to them.

Moreover, angels have an interest in Christ's incarnation. Says the eminent Edwards—"The divine nature is at infinite distance from the nature of angels, as well as from the nature of men. This distance forbids a familiarity, and intimacy of intercourse. It is, therefore, a great advantage to the angels, that God is come down to them, in a created nature, and in that nature has become their head; so that their intercourse and enjoyment may be more intimate. They are invited by the similar qualifications of the created nature with which the Son of God is invested." There is also, here, a wonderful unfolding of God's plan to the angels. Thus, their knowledge is increased. "Seen of angels."

Angels beheld man on the day of his creation—a creature of heavenly mould—of divine beauty, the master-piece of creation pertaining to earth.

Then "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." They witnessed his fall, and then, it may be, felt that he was cut off from the sphere of their operations and affections. He was no longer the object of their delightful interest and association.

But in the development of the mystery of godliness, in the plan of salvation, they discover the way of his restoration. He may yet bear the lost image of his Creator in knowledge, righteousness and holiness. Hence, their interest is re-enlisted. Hence, they rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. Hence, they are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation. "Seen of angels."

An angel announced the mysterious conception to the virgin Mary. An angel bore the tidings of His birth to the shepherds. Angels sang "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men," in view of that event. Angels ministered unto Jesus upon His return from His temptation in the wilderness. An angel appeared strengthening Him in His agony in the garden. Angels were about His tomb, on the morning of His resurrection. Angels shall accompany Him when He cometh the second time, without sin, unto salvation. Here is a mystery of godliness in giving intensity to angelic worship.

A mystery of godliness is the connection of angels with the salvation of man. How much,

under God, we are indebted to angels for support in trial, and for strength in duty, we, perhaps, will never know in this world. An angel, we have said, appeared strengthening Christ in His agony: unseen they may often do the same for His people in their trials. We are told of a maiden confessor of Christ in the early days of Christianity, that she endured great suffering with almost supernatural fortitude. When asked how she was enabled so to endure, she replied, "I saw an angel standing by." Was it a fact, and was her natural vision so strengthened that she perceived the heavenly messenger standing by? Possibly her faith was so lively, that what appeared to the eye of faith seemed as vivid and real as if seen by the eye of sense. "Faith," says the Apostle, "is the evidence of things not seen." "Did we not cast three men into the furnace?" said the Babylonish king, "lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." How much we owe to angels for our better thoughts and desires, for support in trial, protection in danger, and strength in duty, is a mystery of godliness. Angels are ministering spirits, gather about the dying pillow, and convey the spirit home to Jesus, and all is part and parcel of the mediatorial work of Christ. "Seen of angels."

IV. Let us now contemplate the Mediator as enlarging the territory of Gospel invitation.

" Preached unto the Gentiles." For long centuries the oracles of the living God were in Jewish hands. Abram, their progenitor, had been specially called out from idolatrous heathen, and taught to worship God in spirit and in truth. Blessings were pronounced as the inheritance of his seed. For a long time spiritual blessings seemed to flow in the channel of his natural seed, and they began to think that this was the extent of the promise, or at any rate, if others shared, it must be by an adoption and observance of the Jewish ritual. Hence, salvation was of the Jews, if not as to its source, at least as to its channel, and that by an immediate connection. They had not dreamed of a dispensation that should as directly address itself to the Gentiles as to the Jews, that should break down the wall of partition, and blot all distinction as to access to divine mercy and grace. This was a mystery. Even the apostles did not understand it for a time. Peter needed a vision and special revelation, to give him freedom to go to Cornelius, a Gentile. The apostles and elders at Jerusalem must have it explained particularly, before they could recognize the righteousness of it. They were slow to understand the teachings of their prophets upon this subject. " That unto the Gentiles should be preached the unsearchable riches of Christ" was a mystery. Christ was to be preached as the great Prophet, Priest and King. Not as was Moses, Aaron and David, who filled

these offices for one nation, and continued but for one generation, but for all nations and forever.

Preached. The form of religious instruction before the coming of Christ, was, perhaps, more constrained, not so free and full. The Savior Himself said before His crucifixion, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And to His disciples the word was, "go ye not in the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Not so, after His resurrection. Then the command was, "go ye into all nations and preach the Gospel unto every creature."

"Preach the Word—be instant in season and out of season. Reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine." The manner of setting forth the way of salvation was, I have thought, enlarged, as well as the range of its travel. It had freer utterance, as well as greater scope.

This is the mystery of godliness. The restraints taken from the Gospel in its extension to all nations tends to its more general acceptance. Men are made to feel that it is no longer the special privilege of a Jew, but the general privilege of all. Though I may be the humblest member of the most obscure tribe of people on earth, still am I, as fully embraced in the invitation of the Gospel as the descendent of the most renowned nation on the globe.

There is a mystery about the Gospel in its being preached. A mystery we may say, in some sort, in the call of a man to preach the Gospel, in the place of his preaching, in the effects of his preaching. Two men may hear the same sermon: to the one it may be the savor of life unto life; to the other, of death unto death. "The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the Word an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation." Godliness is promoted by preaching. Faith is strengthened, zeal quickened, love increased, penitence deepened, humility promoted, and fruitfulness in every good word and work thereby enlarged. God sends His children help from the sanctuary, and strengthens them out of Zion. They sit under the droppings of the sanctuary, and are refreshed. Sinners, too, are awakened, convinced and converted. Feeble men, intellectually, and in faith also, are made instrumental in promoting godliness. God accompanies His own truth by demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. The preaching of the Cross may be "to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks, foolishness; but unto those that believe, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Preached unto the Gentiles.

.V Consider the work of this Mediator in its effect or reception. "Believed on in the world."

When we consider the reasonableness and necessity to man of salvation, we are led to wonder that its offer does not meet with universal acceptance. We think it strange that every starving son and daughter, do not at the first invitation, rush to the Gospel feast; but when we consider the blinding and deluding effects of sin upon the soul, and the great opposition presented by the world, the flesh and the devil, we are led to say it is a wonder of grace, that the Gospel message is ever accepted. But, in this sin-ruined, sin-darkened and sin-enslaved world, Jesus Christ is by many believed on unto salvation. All, says Christ, that the Father hath given Me, shall come to Me, and whosoever cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out. Even in the hour of His crucifixion, a poor, suffering malefactor, who said his sentence was just, a dying thief lifted up a believing prayer to Jesus—"Lord," said he, "remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom." "This day," said Christ, "thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." The dying thief believed, and was saved.

The preaching of the Gospel was to begin at Jerusalem. Even to His betrayers and murderers were its offers made, and even there grace had its trophies. In Jerusalem, the city where our Lord was crucified, three thousand in one day gladly received the Word, and were baptized. Jesus Christ is believed on unto salvation in this world, wherever the Gospel is preached. In this world

where the whole spirit and drift of its influences are against it, in this world where the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life have great sweep and power, where riches, pleasure and honor are mighty in their influence—in this world where Satan is the god, and works powerfully to blind and allure men to death—even in this world, O mystery of grace, souls fly to Jesus and live. Faith is found even here; faith of a divine operation, working by love, purifying the heart, and overcoming the world; faith leading to the "denying of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to the living soberly, righteously and godly;" faith tending unto godliness is found even here. "Believed on in the world." Faith in Christ has a mysterious power in moulding the heart for heaven. "Believed on in the world."

VI. Lastly, let us contemplate this Mediator in His exaltation. "Received up into glory." Under the Jewish dispensation, "the High Priest entered once a year into the Holy of Holies, not without blood, which he offered for himself and the errors of the people. The Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while the first tabernacle was yet standing. But Christ, with His own blood entered into the holiest of all, even into heaven itself." In Him was the way made manifest. He ascended as the great Intercessor, ever to appear in the presence of God for us. Hence, we are invited

to "come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." He is there as an admitted Advocate, having authority to plead for all that come to God through Him.

> "For all that come to God by Him,
> Salvation He demands;
> Points to their names upon His breast,
> And spreads His bleeding hands,
> With cries and groans He offered up,
> His humble suit below;
> But with authority He asks,
> Enthroned in glory now."

He is there a glorious Mediator with excellences as Prophet, Priest and King without a parallel. As a Prophet divine, He fully understands the case. He needs not that any should teach Him of man. He understands the law. He knows the Judge. "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him. As a Priest, He has that to offer which is efficient to propitiate: "the blood of Christ complete atonement makes." As a King, He sits upon His mediatorial throne, and concerning Him, the decree is gone forth, "ask of Me and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." He is a glorious Mediator, an ever-prevalent Advocate. And herein, is the mystery of godliness. "Simon—Simon," said the Savior, 'Satan hath desired to

have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.' "I pray not," said He, concerning His disciples in another place, "that Thou shouldest take them out of the world; but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Here is the secret of recovering grace to the backslider. Here the secret of sustaining grace to the consistent believer. It is in the divine intercession. By Him the heart obtains access to the mercy seat, and finds strength in communion with God. This is why the righteous holds on his way. This is why he grows in grace.

This, also, is the secret of the Church's growth on earth. Thus the "other sheep" are brought into the one fold and rejoice in the care of the one Shepherd. Thus it is that the Spirit is sent into the world to perform His mighty and gracious work. Said the blessed Savior when about to finish His work on earth, "I will pray the Father, and He shall send you another comforter, even the Spirit of truth, and when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment to come." Here is the mystery of godliness. Christ having finished His work on earth, has ascended up into glory.

This doctrine of the mystery of godliness, as connected with the divine-human Mediator, has had its opposers.

Some strike at once at the whole system, and cry, away with your religion of mystery; we will

have nothing to do with that we cannot understand. Hence, the doctrine of two natures, divine and human, constituting the one person of Christ, is ignored. We can only say, such as do this, are manifestly in opposition to the teaching of God,s Word. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness." We cannot regard these as children of the truth, and in the way of life. For, says the Apostle Paul, "But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." And, says the Apostle John, concerning this doctrine of Jesus Christ coming in the flesh, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

"Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness." If such be the plan of godliness, we need the divine teacher to guide us aright. We need the divine power of the Holy Spirit. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Hence, the need of prayer, for the divine Spirit, that He may take of the things that are Christ's and show them unto us.

Hence, also we need to study diligently the Word of God. "Search the Scriptures," said the Savior, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me." They

teach the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh. Blessed be God, for the revelation of so wonderful a Mediator, so complete in His person, God manifested in the flesh, and so suited to His work. "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required; then said I, "Lo, I come," in the volume of the book it is written of me, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God. Yea, Thy law is within my heart." So worthy is He of His office. The admiration of angelic intelligences. The Lion of the tribe of Judah is worthy to take the book and open the seals.

The great theme of all evangelical preaching, the foundation of every true believer's hope is the glorious King of Zion, seated upon His mediatorial throne, head over all things for His Church. As He is human, he canHe touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

> "In every pang that rends the heart,
> The man of sorrows had a part;
> And still remembers in the skies,
> His tears and agonies and sighs."

As Divine, He is our powerful Advocate, "able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him." As the Prince of angels they delight to minister unto Him, and co-operate in carrying out His kingdom in the hearts of men. He provides means, and gives them efficiency through the agency of His blessed Spirit. He is exalted

at the right hand of God, the Father, until all things are made subject unto Him. He shall gather nations to judgment. His throne shall one day appear in the heavens, and every eye shall see Him.

He is now carrying on His work, going forth conquering and to conquer. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, until He shall secure complete and everlasting victory. They that are with Him, of angels and men, are called, chosen and faithful. My hearer, where do you range? His own declaration concerning us all is, "he that is not against us is for us." Are you now standing up for Christ? It was the message of a dying minister to the people of his charge — "Tell them," said he, "that I want them all to stand up for Jesus." I rejoice that it is my privilege to present for your acceptance, so glorious and suitable a Savior. Where do you range? "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

IV.

2 Peter i: 21—"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

PROPHECY, in its fulfillment, is a standing, and even accumulating, testimony to the divine authorship of the Bible. It proves it to be a revelation from God.

The foundation of all true religion, is the existence of a great First Cause, from which all else has received existence, and upon which it constantly depends for support and blessing. Creation around us demands our admission of such a Being, and conscience within us points, with solemn finger, to Him as our final Judge. Hence, says the apostle: "For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead: so that, they are without excuse."

And, again, speaking of the Gentiles, or heathen, he says: "Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts, meanwhile, accusing, or else excusing, one another."

But, while creation proclaims a God, the Maker and Preserver of all, and while conscience convicts of guilt, they leave the soul uncheered and without peace. They do not tell how guilt may be canceled, and man find acceptance with God. Hence, we find among the more thoughtful of the wise men among the heathen, such as Socrates, and others, expressions of earnest desire for more light, and sometimes the glimmering of a hope that further and more direct revelation would be made.

Now, that further revelation for which the minds of the more thoughtful heathen yearned, we profess to have in the Bible. It offers itself unto us as "a lamp to our feet and a light to our path." If it is, indeed, a revelation from God, then it is worth more to us than all other knowledge. If it is the Word of God, then we should bind it to our hearts, and make its teachings our constant study. If it is not, then are we out upon the stormy sea, without a chart to teach us how we may make the port of safety. The great inquiry with us, then, is, first of all: "Is the Bible the Word of God?"

Now, if in this book, God has given us a revelation of His will concerning us, to teach us how we may become freed from guilt, and find acceptance with Him, it is natural to suppose, having endowed us with reason, He would give us some rational evidence suited to assure us of it. And further, it is reasonable to conclude that, in regard

to this evidence, it would be made available to us in such a way as to cause us to feel our special dependence upon Him. As those who delivered it, did it "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," so those who receive it to salvation, do it as moved by the Holy Spirit. Hence, we see the necessity of the enlightening agency of the Holy Spirit, in order that we may be savingly benefitted. "For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

The text directs our attention to prophecy: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Leaving, therefore, for the present, out of view other evidences of the divine authorship of the Bible, internal and external, we purpose to attend to this.

Prophecy may be called an abiding miracle. As an evidence of the truth of the Scriptures, it has the advantage of a constant confirmation. Like the rolling of a mass of snow, it gathers weight by every revolution.

Prophecy is a miracle of knowledge. It implies a discernment greater than any human foresight. It was a gift of ancient time. Like other miraculous gifts, it was designed to supply the wants of the Church until the canon of Scripture should be completed, and when that was accomplished, it ceased from among men.

"Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man;" it was not the result of laborious study, not the perception of political forecast, not the result of patient philosophical investigation, not the production of curious art or magical incantations; "Holy men of God," says the text, "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." It was given as a witness of the truth, as a light in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts. It is a sort of evidence that is, in some good degree, within the grasp of the unregenerate. It commends itself, therefore, to those who are without, as well as those within, the number savingly enlightened from on high.

But, my hearers, there is scarcely a stream of truth, or beam of light, sent down from heaven, that Satan has not contrived to muddy and darken. Are there true miracles? There are also those which are spurious. Is there true prophecy? There is also spurious prophecy.

Satan is a great deceiver and counterfeiter, and it becomes us to be wary, lest we be entangled in his devices. With the true prophets, there were also false prophets. But, as now, so then, the difference between the true and the false was, to a careful observer, manifest. The true ever related to matters solemn, important and of practical utility; the false were often of things vain and worthless. The true was ever a reproof of wickedness, however popular or prevalent, in high

places; the false was accommodated to the prejudices of the people, and to flatter the powerful. The true were accessible to all, without regard to their position or possessions; the false were held at so high a rate that the poor were often shut out from their pretended benefit. The true was, in its language, direct and pointed; the false was exceedingly ambiguous.

We notice a few examples. Crœsus, king of the Lydians, about to make an invasion of the territory of the Persians, consulted the oracle. He was told that if he crossed the river, he would destroy a great empire. This might mean either his own, or that of the enemy. He interpreted the oracle as favoring the enterprise, and thereby ruined his own kingdom.

Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, consulted the oracle in reference to an expedition against the Romans, and received a response, which might mean that he would conquer the Romans, or they him. The result was his own overthrow.

In 1 Kings xxii: 5, 6, we read that Jehoshaphat and Ahab, kings of Judah and Israel, were about to make war with the Syrians, for the recovery of Ramoth-Gilead. Wicked Ahab had four hundred prophets gathered ready to flatter him in his ways. "Go up," say they, "for the Lord shall deliver into the king's hand." Our translators have supplied the word "it," — "deliver it into the hand of the king," — but, in the original, it is simply

"deliver," and might, of course, mean either into the hand of the king of Syria or of Israel. Ahab, blind to their duplicity, went, and was slain in battle.

I have thought it might be profitable unto us, to notice a few of the many prophecies recorded in the Scriptures. Among so many, it is difficult to select, but we shall confine ourselves, for the present, to a few, which seem to us among the most convincing. We will confine our remarks to such as are in the course of fulfillment, or have received a complete accomplishment.

The prophecies that went before, concerning Christ, and their fulfillment in Him, while they are, of all others, the most important to us, are also the most striking. They extend back four thousand years previous to His manifestation in the flesh, and onward through all time. But, for the present, we will confine our observations to those which preceded His incarnation. The first of these, we find, was announced in the day of man's transgression, when Satan, in the serpent hid, proposed to, and succeeded in persuading, man to partake of the fruit which God had forbidden him. Then God declared that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." This intimated that God, in His sovereign way, had provided to counteract this dreadful work of Satan. That seed referred to Jesus Christ, who, in the appointed time, should appear to destroy

the works of the devil. To this, henceforth, the expectation of the human race was directed. Hence, when to Eve, the mother of all living, was born a son, she exclaimed: "I have gotten a man from the Lord." In him, there is reason to believe, she looked for the fulfillment of the promise. Disappointed as to her hopes by her first-born, and also in regard to Abel, whom Cain slew, her expectations revived at the birth of Seth. "God," said she, "hath appointed unto me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." To Seth was born Enos, and then, we are told, "men began to call upon the name of the Lord." The way of access to the throne of mercy, through the promised Seed, seems to have awakened special attention in connection with the birth of children. In the line of Enos, we find Enoch, who was endued with the gift of prophecy, and was translated without seeing death. This, no doubt, served to make men feel that God had still thoughts of mercy to the human race. In the line of Enoch, we find Lamech, to whom was born Noah, to whom he looked, in some way, for comfort. Through him, a remnant were saved from the destruction of the flood, by means of the ark. Noah was induced to pronounce a special blessing upon his child Shem, in whose line came Abram, with whom God entered into covenant, saying, that in him and his seed should all nations be blessed. That covenant was renewed with Isaac,

and again with Jacob, thus pointing out the line of the blessed seed. Jacob, when on his dying bed, spake of Judah, saying: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." Of this tribe came David, to whose seed God promised an everlasting kingdom.

Now, we find in the history of Israel, that they became divided into two kingdoms — Ephraim and Judah — and, while the kingdom of Ephraim passed away, that of Judah, after great vicissitudes, remained until the coming of Christ, the Shiloh of Jacob's prophecy. The kingdom of Judah was conquered by Pompey, the Roman general, fifty-nine years before the coming of Christ, but re-established by the favor, and under the protection, of the Romans, who placed Herod the Great, son of Antipater, on the throne of David. Judea was still a kingdom, and possessing a scepter. In the reign of Herod, Christ was born, and soon after his death, Judea was reduced to a Roman province, over which governors were appointed by the Roman emperors, until its final extinction. Thus, we see, the scepter, or regal government, departed not from Judah until Shiloh came, after which, it departed, and returned no more.

As to the promise to David, that his seed should be established upon his throne forever, we find it said, "that Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus, was of the house and lineage of

David," and, although Christ came not out of the loins of David, yet, God was pleased, by His own sovereign appointment, to make Him David's Son. He is David's Son, by divine appointment, and David's Lord, by divine relation.

The kingdom of Judah, as an earthly government, ruled by David and his successors, was a type of God's spiritual kingdom, of which Jesus Christ is the King. Now, when Christ, the antitype, came and entered upon His kingly work, the type was no longer needed, and hence, vanished away. The kingdom of the Jews no longer lives, but Christ, the spiritual King, sits upon the throne of David, king of the chosen people of God, evermore.

But Christ, in the first prophecy, is called, emphatically, the seed of the woman. By the prophet Isaiah, it is declared: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Hence, we read in Luke, that the angel Gabriel was sent to a virgin, named Mary, to announce to her that, by the mighty power of God, directly exercised towards her, she should become the mother of Jesus. Thus, we find, the announcement, and, in the event, the prophecy literally fulfilled.

There was, moreover, a prophecy specifying the place of His birth: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet, out of thee shall He come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings

forth have been from of old, from everlasting." And, in the Gospels, we find it recorded, that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, of Judea. Thus, we find, that Jesus was born in the fullness of time, when the scepter of Judah was upon the very point of filling up its allotted space, and at the very place designated by prophecy.

Moreover, the time of His crucifixion, is specially a matter of prophecy. "Seventy weeks," said the angel Gabriel to Daniel, "are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgressions and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off." And, further on, it is said: "And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations He shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." The following observations of Dr. Samuel Clarke, communicated to him, as he acknowledges, by Sir

Isaac Newton, elucidate this prophecy: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people," &c.: was this written after the event? or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that, from the seventh year of Artaxerxes, the king, when Ezra went up from Babylon to Jerusalem, with a commission to restore the government of the Jews, to the death of Christ, should be precisely four hundred and ninety, or seventy weeks of years? When the angel tells Daniel that, in threescore and two weeks, the street of Jerusalem should be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times, (but this "in troublous times," not like those that should be under Messiah, the Prince, when He should come to reign): was this written after the event? or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that, from the twenty-eighth year of Artaxerxes, when the walls were finished, to the birth of Christ, should be precisely four hundred and thirty-four, or sixty-two weeks of years? When Daniel further says: "And He shall confirm, or, nevertheless, He shall confirm the covenant with many, for one week": was this written after the event? or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that, from the death of Christ to the command given first to Peter, to preach to Cornelius and the Gentiles, should be exactly seven, or one week of years? When he still adds: "And, in the midst of the week," (or in half a week,) "He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the

overspreading of abominations He shall make it desolate": was this written after the event? or can it, with any reason, be ascribed to chance, that, from Vespasian's march into Judea, in the spring of A. D., sixty-seven, to the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, in the autumn of A. D., seventy, should be half a centenary of years, or three years and a half? Thus, we find a very literal fulfillment of the prophecies relating to the time of Christ's crucifixion, and in reference to Jerusalem, as uttered by Daniel.

Moreover, the crucifixion of Christ made an end of sin-offering, legally: His one offering was the great antitype — the fullness of all that was typical. Then did He make complete reconciliation for iniquity — complete atonement. "Then did He bring in everlasting righteousness;" not like that of the first covenant head, even Adam, which was soon lost, but of everlasting righteousness.

But we turn to notice some other prophecies.

There is a people inhabiting a district of country, between ancient Egypt and Palestine, who are distinct from all other people, and who are mentioned by almost all travelers through that region. Their home is among the craggy rocks of the mountains, in their deep ravines, or on the confines of vast desert plains. They are fierce and hostile to all people, and have never been subdued by any. They have been the lords of that territory for near four thousand years, and have laid tribute, by

force or by fraud, upon all who have passed through. Mounted upon their swift coursers, and armed with spears and firelocks, they sweep over the desert with the speed of a racer, or haunt the mountain passes, ever ready to strike a blow, and to retreat beyond the reach of their pursuers. The conquerors of the world have tried their might upon them in vain. Cyrus, who overturned the Babylonish empire, left them unconquered. Alexander the Great, whose march through the world was one of continued conquest, could not reduce these savage hosts to subjection. Nor did the Roman eagle compel reverence or tribute from them. Still they dwell where their fathers dwelt, wild, fierce, and owning no master but their own will. These are the descendants of Ishmael, concerning whom the Scriptures declared, near four thousand years ago, while he was yet unborn: "And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him: and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." See Gen. xvi : 12. Here is prophecy and fulfillment.

There is another people, equally remarkable, but very unlike the former. They are scattered over almost the whole world. They have been a prey to their enemies for more than eighteen hundred years. They are a race, distinct and peculiar, and yet, they have no country they can call their own, nor have had, for centuries past,

They are strangers and sojourners everywhere, and, for the most part, engage in business of such a character as to be ready to move at short notice. They are a fugitive race, although they boast an ancestry as noble as ever graced a throne, or adorned a palace. No people were ever the channels of greater blessings to the human race, yet none are more despised than they. These are the descendants of Abraham through Isaac, concerning whom, it was declared more than three thousand years ago, "that if they turned away from following the Lord, all these evils should come upon them." Thus, it is said, in Deut. xxviii : 37: "And thou shalt become an astonishment and a proverb and a by-word among all nations." See, also, vs. 64, 65: "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other, and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind." Indeed, almost this whole chapter is strikingly prophetical of the calamities that have come upon the Jewish nation.

Here, there are two distinct races, living witnesses, by reason of prophecy, of the divine authorship of the sacred Scriptures. Here, the prophecy is, without ambiguity and fulfillment, equally clear.

There is a remarkable instance of the exact fulfillment of a minute and isolated prophecy, concerning the Rechabites. These Rechabites, it appears, were the descendants of Hobab, who, at the invitation of Moses, accompanied the children of Israel from the land of Midian to the land of Canaan. Their more immediate ancestor was Jehonadab. He it was who gave that rule of life to his children and posterity, of which we read in Jer. xxxv : 6, 7. It consisted of these three articles: that they should drink no wine: that they should neither possess nor occupy any houses, fields or vineyards: that they should dwell in tents. This was the institution of the children of Rechab; and this they continued to observe for upwards of three hundred years, from the time of Jehu to that of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, when Nebuchadnezzar, coming to besiege Jerusalem, the Rechabites were obliged to leave the country and take refuge in the city. In Jer. xxxv, there is a promise made to this people, "that Jonadab, the son of Rechab, should not want a man to stand before the Lord;" that is, that his posterity should not fail; and, to this day, says the Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, this tribe is found among the Arabians of the desert, distinct, free, and practicing exactly the institutions of Jonadab, whose name they bear, and of whose institutions they boast.

We will now notice an example or two of prophecy relating to places, and their fulfillment.

Those relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, are so well known, that, for the present, we forbear to make them the subject of distinct consideration.

In Ezekiel xxvi : 3–5, we have a prophecy concerning Tyre: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God: and it shall become a spoil to the nations."

When these words were uttered, Tyre was in her glory. Situated by the sea, she was fed by commerce. Her ships traded with the nations that bordered upon the Mediterranean, while her markets were resorted to by caravans from a distance, by land. Her riches were greatly increased, and, with riches, came pride and the pomp of power. If the words of the prophet were thought of at all, they were disregarded. She put off the evil day, and reveled in her abundance, unmindful of the Giver.

But the word of the Lord had gone forth, and Nebuchadnezzar, that battle-axe of Jehovah, the king of Babylon, sat down before it with his army, to besiege and destroy it. Thirteen years was he thus employed, until, in the language of prophecy,

every head was made bald and every shoulder peeled. The city was overcome and laid waste. In after years, it was rebuilt upon an island near, and attained to much of its former glory. Perhaps the skeptic might be ready to say: "Where, now, is the Lord's threatening? Behold, Tyre has risen, and sits like a queen in the midst of the sea." Two hundred years pass away, and Alexander, the leopard of Daniel's prophecy, appears to break down the pride of Tyre. Out of the ruins of the old city, scraping up the very dust, he builds a causeway to the island on which stands the new, overcomes and takes possession of the city. From that time, although it revived, it attained no more to its former glory. The sea has broken over her walls, and thus added to her desolation. In the seventh century, it was taken by the Saracens; in the twelfth, by the Crusaders; the Mamelukes succeeded, and it remained for three hundred years in possession of the Turks. A few wretched cabins, says a traveler, inhabited by miserable fishermen, with the residences of the officers of the government, is all that remains to the once exalted Tyre. She has become, literally, a place for fishermen to dry their nets, and as the top of a rock. Such is the prophecy, and such has been the fulfillment, in relation to Tyre.

Let us now briefly contemplate Babylon.

While in the midst of her greatness, the prophet Isaiah was inspired to speak thus: "And Babylon,

the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beast of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged."

Babylon was one of the greatest cities of the East, built upon the river Euphrates, and surrounded by a wall sixty miles in length, eighty feet thick, and, according to some, extending to the enormous height of three hundred and fifty feet. Others make the length of the wall forty-eight miles; height, seventy-five feet; breadth, forty-five feet; and inhabited by perhaps four millions of people. Everything that was known to the ancients, that could adorn, strengthen and enrich, was lavished here. Doubtless, they who dwelt there, supposed that they should long endure, and, perhaps, in the proud phraseology of the day, they were ready to name themselves the eternal city. But God had declared the fall of Babylon. More than a hundred years previous, before he

was born, Cyrus had been named as the general who should take possession of that city and tread its glory in the dust. "Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut." See Isa. xlv : 1.

In due time, did Cyrus, with his army, encamp against Babylon; but, with the weapons of war then known, it must have appeared, at least, but a very doubtful enterprise. He thought, at one time, of attempting to scale the walls, but abandoned the idea. Again, he thought of reducing it by famine; but in the city were provisions sufficient for twenty years, besides much open ground, capable of cultivation, and thus prolonging the measure of needed sustenance. At length, after revolving in his mind various methods of attack, he concluded to make an attempt to enter the city by surprise. Having learned that a great festival was about to be observed by the Babylonians, and knowing that, on such occasions, they gave themselves up to revelings and drunkenness, he selected the night of their dissipation to carry out his plan. Arrangements had been made for turning the waters of the river into an extended basin, from whence it could be diverted for purposes of irrigation. This was used by the Babylonians in the rise of the river, and answered the

double purpose of preserving the city from inundation and securing water for purposes of husbandry. Cyrus directed the sluices leading to this basin to be opened in proper time, as also those leading into the trenches he had opened around the walls of the city. Now, the city was built upon each side of the river and walled up on its banks. In these river walls were gates going down to the water on each side opposite. The soldiers of the Persian army, stationed above and below the city, found, about midnight, the water sufficiently abated to be forded, and, wading along the walls, found the gates leading from the river to the city open, and, ascending, they, by these means entered into the city. Lost to all sense of danger in their drunken revels, the Persian soldiers met with but little resistance.

Strange things were then taking place in the royal palace. Belshazzar and his lords had been drinking wine out of the vessels once taken from the temple of the Lord. While thus engaged in drinking and praising their idol gods, a hand was seen portraying strange characters on the walls. Belshazzar was filled with terror, and his drunken companions were stupified with astonishment. Daniel, a man of God, was found able to read the writing and make known the interpretation. It informed him that his kingdom was at an end. Again, that same night, they were startled by a tumult from without; the gates of the palace were

thrown open, when in rushed the enemy. Belshazzar was slain, and Babylon was possessed by the Medes and Persians. Cyrus did not make a complete destruction of Babylon. He made it, indeed, for the most part, the place of his residence; but the kings of the Persians after him preferred other cities. In the time of Darius, it rebelled, but was again taken by means of the crafty policy of Zopyrus, one of his generals. It was again taken by Alexander the Great. But time would fail us to follow out its history. Gradually it went to decay, became deserted, and was, at one time, used as a park for wild beasts. From the change of the channel of the river, a part of the city was converted into a swamp, or marsh. Thus, amid the heaps of its ruins, reptiles, fierce and venomous, found a hiding place, and the wild beasts of the islands cry in those desolate places. There, travelers tell us, the Arabian refuses to pitch his tent or fold his flock, out of a superstitious dread of unearthly interruption. Nothing, we are told, can induce the wild sons of the desert to spend a night there. So literally is the prophecy fulfilled concerning Babylon. Other prophecies might be mentioned, whose fulfillment is equally striking. But, for the present, what has been said must suffice.

Surely, a volume containing such predictions, and attested by such literal fulfillment, has an undoubted claim to divine authorship. It is the

word of Him who knoweth the end from the beginning. In the Bible, we have the "sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to take heed."

From this subject, we should be excited to praise God for His goodness in adapting the evidences of the truth of His Word to our comprehension. God's wisdom and divinity are exhibited in creation. The heavens declare His glory and the firmament showeth forth His handy-work. He has not left Himself without a witness in the rain and fruitful season. All this, indeed, is worthy of our gratitude, but we could not learn from these the way of salvation. We could not tell how God could be just and yet pardon and bless the transgressor. That was reserved for a special revelation, to be attested by evidences strongly appealing to our senses.

The wild, fierce and hostile Arab still inhabits the home of his fathers; amid all the revolutions of kingdoms, he is still distinct, peculiar and stationary — the living declaration of the truth of prophecy uttered thousands of years gone by. The Jew, equally distinct and peculiar, and found everywhere dispersed, furnishes another testimony to the truth of God's Word. The Rechabites also live as witnesses of the truth of prophecy.

But not only people, but places, stand up as abiding witnesses for the truth of the sacred Scriptures. Tyre, desolate, and a place for the spreading of nets: Tyre, once the glory of the

sea, now broken down and without walls, with not a tower left to tell what her strength has been: Babylon, once most magnificent, now given to utter ruin, where no shepherd pens his flock, or Arab pitches his tent — are abiding evidences to us that the Word of God is sure and steadfast.

We see here that the unbeliever is without excuse. Here is evidence that he can see and handle, evidence that is writtten out in lines as legible as any human history. True, you may never have wandered over the burning sands, or penetrated the mountain passes of the land of the Ishmaelite. You cannot testify from personal observation to the faithfulness of the record of his character, position and habits; yet, you may read it in the journal of every traveler, whether infidel or Christian, who has passed through that country. Profane history, by the record it gives of the kingdoms of the East, and their desolation, becomes a witness for the truth of the Bible from the fulfillment of its prophecies, and infidel journals lend their unwilling testimony in support of revelation.

In regard to the Jews, God has given you the testimony of his presence. He is here a restless wanderer. In general, you find him with his business in such a condition as to be ready to depart at a brief warning: you find him a by-word and a proverb. Wherever you see a Jew, you see a living declaration of the truth of prophecy. Here,

then, is evidence, which, if you will not receive, leaves you without excuse for your unbelief.

We remark, again, that, from this subject, we may learn the certainty of the fulfillment of all that is recorded in the Bible. That already accomplished, is an earnest and pledge of all the rest. Every promise and threatening will be realized in its appointed time. "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor the son of man, that He should repent: hath He spoken, and shall He not do it? hath He commanded, and shall He not make it good?"

This subject is calculated to give comfort to all who love God. To them are given great and precious promises. He hath promised that He will never leave nor forsake those who put their trust in Him. The world is under His control, and He is able, according to His promise, to make all things work together for good to them who love Him. Hence, they may rejoice under every circumstance, knowing that the Lord reigneth.

This subject may well lead the ungodly to tremble. God has said that the wicked shall be turned into hell; that the reward of his hands shall be given him. It is a mournful thing to look upon the Arab, wild, fierce and hostile, living in savage liberty, without God and without hope in the world. Amid revolving ages, remaining without improvement; still uncultivated as the rugged rocks of his country, and, in all his activity, as little improved as his desert's shifting sand.

It is mournful to look upon the Jew, as, like an exile, he moves from country to country, with none that he can call his own. Mournful to mark his want of a feeling of security and permanent abode. Mournful to think that thus he has been, for eighteen hundred years, a sad and isolated stranger, helpless and unprotected. Sad, too, it is, to think of cities and countries given over to absolute desolation. Where once was heard the joyful shout, now nothing is heard but the constant moan of the restless sea. Where once was seen the busy throng, buying and selling costly merchandise, clad like princes, now nothing is seen but men with tattered garb and squalid look, spreading their nets upon the rock where Tyre once sat in queenly majesty.

Mournful to think of the heaps of desolation and the moving of loathsome and hissing reptiles, where once Babylon, great and populous, stood forth in beauty and grandeur, the glory of the world. Alas for human greatness and glory without God!

But there is a still sadder thought than that which gathers about all these. There is a hostility to be developed in the impenitent sinner, in comparison with which, the wild, fierce, and ungovernable condition of the Arab, is mild and happy. There is a banishment to the sinner, in comparison with which, the exiled state of the Jew is blessed. There is a desolation to come

over the prospects of the impenitent sinner, yea, to take possession of his soul, in comparison with which, Tyre and Babylon shall be forgotten. Yes, God has declared that he is hastening to a place "where the worm dieth not and where the fire is not quenched." Except he repent, he must perish. Just as certain as the Ishmaelite is a wild man — his hand against every man and every man's hand against him — just as certain as the Jew is an exile from the land of his fathers — just as certain as Tyre and Babylon are a desolation — just so certain will the sinner, except he repent and turn to God in the day of His merciful visitation, be lost, and lost forever.

"Take heed, lest there be in any of you a heart of unbelief." Beware, that ye fall not under the condemnation of the despisers, who wonder and perish. How inexcusable the guilt of those who rush over the precipice with a blazing torch in their hands! How obstinate the perversity of those who rush on in the way to ruin, while the voice of warning and entreaty is sounding in their ears! How awfully aggravated the sin of those who fall into hell with an open Bible before their eyes!

V.

Joshua xxii: 20—"Did not Achan, the son of Zerah, commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? and that man perished not alone in his iniquity."

DIVINE truth asserts that no man liveth to himself alone. There is an influence exerted by every individual, that tells for good or evil upon all around. We may think little of our responsibility and be ready to ask, with insolence, like wicked Cain: am I my brother's keeper? but it will not excuse our indifference, atone for our negligence, or stay the tide of our influence. Whether we admit it or not, the truth remains, that we are living examples and the world is the better or worse for our history. No man can cut loose from the moral effects of his position and character.

It is a sad consideration, that a man should be his own destroyer—whether that distruction relate to property, reputation or life. But more sad to feel that he is the destroyer of his family with him—of the wife whom he has solemnly pledged himself to love, cherish and support—of the children who, under God, owe to him their being, and in regard to whom every instinct of nature and grace

calls loudly upon him to do what in him lies for their well-being. Sadder still is it to contemplate the case of one who not only destroys his family in relation to all earthly good, comfort, position and character, but by his influence and power drags them down, soul and body, into the pit of eternal perdition.

And this applies not only to the husband and father, but equally, perhaps to a greater degree, to the wife and mother. Even of Solomon it is said, that him did outlandish women cause to sin. And of Jezebel the record is, that she stirred up her husband to commit wickedness.

And children have sometimes been the destroyers of their own parents. It is said, the mother of David Hume, upon her dying bed, upbraided her son with being unable to restore the heavenly hope his pestiferous sophistry had taken from her.

The rich man in the parable besought Abraham that he would send Lazarus to his father's house: for, said he, I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them lest they also come to this place of torment. Probably he felt that he was guilty of having led them, by his example and precepts, in the way to destruction, and he shrank from the idea of their coming to that place and charging upon him their ruin. Men do not perish alone. They exert an influence which involves others also.

This is especially illustrated in the history of Achan. Did not Achan, the son of Zerah, com-

mit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel, and that man perished not alone in his iniquity?

Achan was of the tribe of Judah, an Hebrew no doubt of the Hebrews. He had, in all probability, been instructed in the duties and doctrines of the true religion. Had heard and learned, we may suppose, the moral precepts of the Decalogue. He knew that the God Jehovah, worshiped by his people, was a thought-knowing and heart-searching God. He knew that it was solemnly enjoined, "Thou shalt not steal." He knew farther, that, in regard to the spoil of Jericho, it was specially devoted to the service of God, and hence to take it was sacrilege, an aggravation of the crime of theft. And yet, notwithstanding all this, he yielded to the temptation and committed the heinous sin.

My hearers, we may be of a good and pious family—may be well instructed, and yet fall in the day of trial. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." It becometh us to pray and teach our children daily to utter the petition, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Hold thou me up that my feet decline not from thy ways."

The sin of which Achan was guilty, was that of sacrilegious theft. "He was tempted by the goodly appearance of the garment and the glitter of the gold and silver. It is surely a great blessing to

have the use of our vision, but often the eye has been the inlet to sin. The fruit of the forbidden tree appeared desirable. Sin has often an attractive appearance. It holds out gratifications that appeal with great power to our senses. And there are some temptations that seem to have peculiar strength to some persons. One who had been addicted to intemperance, used to say, that the sound of the liquor, running from a cask or bottle, awakened in him such strong desire, that his only safety was in hasting out of hearing. Some seem to be possessed with a thieving propensity, and need to be especially guarded in that direction. Some seem to be constitutionally given to lying, and need earnestly to pray, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips." Achan may have had a strong propensity to theft, and though the property in question was guarded by such terrible warning, yet he sinned. He coveted, he took, he hid it in his tent.

It seems that the matter was managed with great secrecy. No one knew, so far as appears, of Achan's guilt, but the all-knowing God and himself. What were his feelings, we can only conjecture. He may have passed a wretched night, with that ill-gotten gain in his tent. Dreams, of a terrible import, may have haunted his guilty imagination. No doubt the thought that he was a thief was ever present to his mind, and would not depart at his bidding.

But what were the effects? The hosts of Israel march on, after the miraculous capture of Jericho, to Ai. They, in general, no doubt felt confident of an easy victory. Achan, it may be, was in line, marching on, perhaps a leader, but, no doubt, his heart betrayed him. A guilty heart makes feeble hands. It may have been in his own part of the army, that signs of faltering first appeared. A few were slain and the army of the Lord were put to flight. Wherefore, the hearts of the people melted and became as water. Joshua and the Elders rent their clothes and prostrated themselves upon the earth before God. "O, Lord, what shall I say," cries Joshua, "when Israel turneth their backs upon their enemies? The Canaanites will hear it and environ us, and cut us off, and what wilt thou do for thy great name?"

Want of success in God's service should lead us to inquire earnestly before God, why it is. "O," said David, "search me, O God, and know me; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting." They that humble themselves in penitence before God, shall in due time be exalted. God tells Joshua, that "there is sin in the camp." The solemn oath of God has been disregarded. Israel is guilty, and therefore cannot stand before their enemies.

And now the solemn investigation commences. God, by means of the lot, is about to point out

the guilty person. Achan may affect composure, but there is a terrible conflict going on in his heart. The lot is cast. It falls on the tribe of Judah. Again: and the family of the Zarhites is taken. Then a more particular branch, the family of Zabdi. Achan sees the line of investigation moving with dreadful accuracy in his direction. No doubt there is quaking in his guilty heart. The lot is given once more, and the name is reached. It is Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah. His sin has found him out, traced by the unerring finger of God.

It is of no use to deny. He makes confession. The stolen property is buried in his tent and is brought out.

It is vain to dig deep to seek to hide counsel from God. Many have tried to conceal their sin from their fellow men, and have, for a time, and perhaps permanently, succeeded. The dishonest gain has been in their possession and, perhaps, become the legacy of their children. The orphan and the widow, or the poor neighbor, have been deprived of their just rights, and none seem to regard it. God says, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl, for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped up treasure together for the

last days. Behold the hire of your laborers that have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and have been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." Sin, sooner or later, will out. Often, in this world, God brings men's sins home to them, and makes the view of it shameful and bitter. So it was with our first parents. Their fig-leaf covering and vain excuses failed to conceal their shame and guilt. The sin of Joseph's brethren, in selling him into the hands of strangers, and imposing upon their father the belief that an evil beast had devoured him, came home to their hearts long years afterward. "And they said, one to another, we are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come unto us." David, the king of Israel, was guilty of flagrant crimes, adultery and murder, and, for a time, seems not to have realized, in any adequate sense, his great wickedness. The time came, however, when the

prophet of the Lord unfolded to him a scene of crime which aroused his sense of justice, and led him to exclaim, "the man that hath done this thing shall surely die." It was then, with visage stern and pointing with earnest finger, the prophet thundered in his ear, "Thou art the man."

Achan's sin came home to him, and "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, and every man shall receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Achan is found guilty, makes confession and receives his sentence. "Why," said Joshua, "hast thou troubled us? The Lord shall trouble thee." His confession did not secure forgiveness. God was pleased, in the sovereign exercise of justice, to have him stoned, and burned with fire after that he was stoned with stones.

And that man perished not alone in his iniquity. They took his oxen and his asses and his sheep, and, dreadful to relate, his sons and his daughters, his tent and the stolen articles, and all that he had, and destroyed all. Oh, it was a fearful sight, when Israel was thus called to execute the judgment of God upon one of their own families. Surely it was a day of deep humiliation before the Most High. They made over the place a great heap of stones, which remained long after, a monument of that fearful execution. After that, Israel was again

victorious; for the sin that had made them flee, was taken away, and the iniquity purged.

From this subject, we see that it is dangerous to tamper with temptation. First, it may be simply a look of admiration upon the forbidden thing; then, it may be, desire is awakened to possess it. "I had not known sin," said the apostle, "except the law had said, 'thou shalt not covet.' "Covetousness," it is said in another place, "is idolatry." Next, it may be, there is a yielding to the temptation. The act is determined upon and the ingenuity is put to work to accomplish it as adroitly as possible. Then, it may be, we try to justify. Such a course have I known in regard to Sabbath-breaking. The command of God comes across our path when we are upon our journey; but it will be attended with additional expense of time and money and convenience, to stop right there, and say we cannot go beyond the Word of the Lord to do less or more. I once knew an Elder of the church, who tried to persuade himself that the necessity of his case justified him in gambling. Men palliate or endeavor to palliate their offenses. They call them by gentle names. Practices which are a grief of heart to all who feel deeply for the interests of Zion, whose tendency is to eat out the vitals of piety, and take away the savor of godliness from the hearts of those who indulge in them, are called innocent amusements. They take the opinions of impenitent men to strengthen them in

their position. They brand those who oppose them with opprobrious epithets. They call evil good and good evil. There is a tendency in men to bring their lives into conformity with the will of God, or to bring the will of God down to their conduct. It is dangerous to tamper with temptation.

But another inference from this subject is, that sin, not put away, unconfessed and unrepented of, takes away the strength of God's people. The guilty individual has no strength. There is no strength in his example. It is but a thread of tow upon which the fire has passed. All its strength is consumed. Neither is there any strength in his precepts. They seem but as a potsherd covered with silver dross. As to any hope of doing good, his hands are tied. He is a soldier who has lost his armor. He stands naked before his enemies, the object of their scorn and derision. Carry the thought out to the head of the family. He allows sin upon his children. So it was with the aged Eli. His sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. His strength is gone. He has no power to warn the unruly; he cannot admonish an unfaithful parent. The cutting retort would come back, physician heal thyself. 'Thou that sayest a man should command his children and his household after him, to keep the ways of the Lord, dost thou allow thine own to go unrestrained and unadmonished? Look at home, cast the beam out of thine own eye.'

Carry the principle to the church. What if they allow sin among them to go unrebuked. Can they occupy an honorable place in the army that goes up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty? Nay, verily. Their feet are unshod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. They are unprepared to stand in the evil day. In regard to such a church, there needs no hand to write upon the wall, TEKEL, 'thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting.' There is no need that any of her sons should bear the name Ichabod—the glory is departed from Israel. The veriest infidel can read it.

Infer, again, that it becomes those whom God has placed as overseers of His people to be deeply humbled and grieved when any yield to the power of temptation. It becomes them to mourn before God and earnestly seek His guidance, in view of their sad condition. It is a solemn position which is occupied by those who are made overseers, by the Holy Ghost, of the house of God. In a strong sense, the reproaches of Christ fall upon them. How affectingly does Moses express his anguish of spirit, when Israel sinned against the Lord. See Ex. xxxii: 31, 32. "And Moses returned unto the Lord and said, 'Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold; yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.'" In another place, see Num.

xi: 14, 15, "I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness."

In the case before us we find Joshua and the elders rending their clothes, putting dust upon their heads, and prostrating themselves upon their faces before the Ark of God. There they bemoaned the calamity that had come upon them. People know but little of the sorrow and prostration which the faithful ministers and elders experience in view of the sin of those committed to their charge. It is the feeling of the vinedresser who, having long and tenderly cultivated his vines, sees that, instead of bringing forth goodly fruit, the production is wild grapes.

We infer, again, that it becomes them, having humbly sought direction from God, to endeavor to remove the evil. Joshua was directed to arise and sanctify the people, and to do what in him lay, to have the evil removed. God has said, "thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, but thou shalt in any wise reprove thy brother, and not suffer sin upon him." But to do this aright, much grace is needed. It is a gracious attainment, to be able to reprove with a merciful spirit. "Rebuke not an Elder, but entreat him as a father, and the younger men as brethren. The elder women as mothers, the younger as sisters with all purity." If a man

be overtaken in a fault, observe he is overtaken, and is not himself going in pursuit of temptation. He does not stand in the way of sinners. If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one. The officer in God's house ought to be especially a spiritually-minded man. "Ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thy self lest thou also be tempted." It has been observed, that the word restore, here, is from a word that refers to the setting of a limb or the restoration of a dislocated joint. Now this, we say, requires promptness, tenderness and faithfulness. It does not admit of unnecessary delay; it would be cruel to exercise any unnecessary harshness; it would also be unfaithful to stop short of getting it to the right place.

Restore such an one—one that has been overtaken in a fault and repents of his sin, not of course who obstinately persists in his wickedness; such an one, after due admonition and effort, must be cut off, like a diseased limb whose continuance endangers the life of the whole body. The great objects to be secured, are the purity of the Church, the glory of God and the proper treatment of the offender, to save him if possible, but if otherwise to separate him from the body.

There is a distinction between offenses private and public. "If thy brother trespass against thee and turn again saying, 'I repent,' thou shalt for-

give him." Here is the case of one who comes voluntarily, not by any external constraint, and the direction is plain. But suppose he comes not. "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault," of course in a Christian manner. Not with passion and upbraiding, but in meekness and love. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother, and thus the matter is settled. "But if he will not hear thee, take with thee two or three more." Of course, brethren whom you have reason to believe are acceptable to him—in whose piety and good-will he has confidence, and let them use their influence with him, to have the matter properly adjusted. If he hear them, then the matter is ended well. But if he will not hear them, then tell it to the Church. Let it be made a matter of Church adjudication as a Court of Jesus Christ, regularly constituted. If he will not hear the Church, and constrain her to cut him off, as one who fails of the manifestation of the spirit and temper pertaining to a Christian, and necessary to a restoration, then let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican — as one whose conduct under treatment justifies the conclusion that the root of vital godliness is not in him. Conduct thyself then towards him as towards one who is a stranger to the grace of God, which teaches us that "denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world." As such, let him still have

thy prayers and thine efforts for his salvation. Thus should we seek to put away evil from the Church and do what in us lies to promote the glory of its Head in doing good to men.

We learn further from this subject, that it becomes those guilty of conduct which affects injuriously the Church of God, to make confession of it before Him, and in the presence of His people. For this, they are to be tenderly addressed, even when their guilt is open and clear. "My son," said Joshua (he addressed him as a father his child), "My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the God of Israel, and make confession unto him, and tell me now what thou hast done." He would have him make a clean breast of it and keep back nothing of his guilt. Achan made a full confession, but Joshua was not permitted to absolve him and restore him to his place as a member of the congregation of the Lord. His was an extorted confession. It came not until the Divine finger had pointed him out as the criminal. What the effect might have been, had he at an earlier stage, come voluntarily, and, with a penitent heart, acknowledged his sin, we know not. But it seems he allowed the melting down of the people and the deep prostration of Joshua and the Elders, in view of their discomfiture, to pass by without making any movement toward confessing his guilt. Now, when constrained to own his guilt, he finds no place for repentance so far as his treatment in this

world is concerned. We are not authorized to say, though he perished so miserably as to his mortal life, that he failed of forgiveness before God through the merits of His Son, and so was lost forever. If he was saved, it was the case of one saved as by fire. We cannot lift the vail. There is a sin unto death. There is a death in unbelief, and that sin and that unbelief may have been his. There is a distress and anguish in view of our sin that comes too late. 'Because I called and ye refused,' therefore, when ye call I will not answer. "Mercy knows her appointed bounds, and turns to vengeance there."

Here we see the dreadful consequences of sin, not only upon the guilty but upon others. This man perished not alone in his iniquity. Wrath fell upon the whole congregation. He was associated with them, and hence brought, by his conduct, affliction upon them also. The weakness of a limb affects the whole body. God is pleased to speak of the Church as "the body of Christ and every one members in particular."

But its heaviest weight came upon his own immediate family. How far they had been corrupted by his example, or were privy to his guilt, we know not, but they were all involved in his ruin. His sons and daughters—they may have been sprightly boys and interesting girls, but they were linked to a wicked father, and he dragged them to ruin with him. He perished not alone.

Thus it is with those who live in sin. They throw around their associates the cords which draw them with themselves to eternal woe. Thus husbands draw their wives, wives their husbands, parents their children, and children their parents. Men perish not alone in their iniquity. How awful the thought that by our sins, our neglects, and our positive acts of wickedness, we may be murdering souls, and that too of those most near and dear to us! How solemn the thought that we must meet them in judgment and dwell with them to all eternity. 'Oh,' said the dying Altamont, 'My ingratitude has alienated my friend, my extravagance has beggared my boy, my unkindness has murdered my wife, and is there another hell!'

My hearers, we are still in the land of the living, in the place of hope, of repentance, of pardon and blessing. If any man sin, there is an advocate with the Father. Now it is said, he that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall obtain mercy. How long that time will continue we know not.

There is a day coming when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed: when every wicked feeling and desire and thought as well as act will be revealed. That day will bring no mercy. Confession and anguish of heart will only foreshadow eternal despair and misery. He that is filthy must so remain. He that is unjust must so continue. The wicked shall be turned into hell,

Now the voice is, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found," etc.

"Did not Achan, the son of Zerah, commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel, and that man perished not alone in his iniquity?"

VI.

2 Timothy i: 9—"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

THE Scriptures assure us that "known unto God are all His works from the foundation of the world," and again, "that His counsel shall stand and He will do all His pleasure," and still further, "that He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." Men are unable to penetrate the future and therefore know not what they shall do even to-morrow. Circumstances may so change as to lead them to act in a manner very different from their previous intention. Thus their plans and purposes are often defeated and instead of working all things after the counsel of their own will, the issue is often directly the reverse. "Man proposes, but God disposes." "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." God alone is Sovereign, Almighty, and without variableness or shadow of turning. He speaks, and it is done: He commands, and it stands fast. He doeth according to His will and pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

But our God is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. Justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne, mercy and truth continually go before His face. The Lord is holy in all His ways and righteous in all His works.

He is so in the destiny He determines, and in the controlling power He exerts, in relation to States and Empires, and in reference to individuals. In the end, it shall doubtless be seen by every properly exercised and correctly informed mind, that He hath done all things well. Then shall all holy beings rejoice, feeling that great is the Lord and of great power: His understanding is infinite.

The text leads us to consider the work of God in the salvation of poor, lost, helpless, sinful souls. "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works; but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Notice

I. The author and nature of this salvation: "Who hath saved us."

II. The means of it: "Called with an holy calling."

III. The foundation of it: 'Not according to our works but according to the purpose and grace of God.'

IV. The security of it: "Given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

1. The nature and author of this salvation: "Who hath saved us." Salvation, as to the nature

of it, implies deliverance from a condition of peril or danger. The salvation which God bestows upon poor sinners in Christ Jesus is spoken of as an everlasting salvation, which implies security from all future danger. Hence it is said, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." This salvation is often set forth as already in the possession of the believer. "By grace are ye saved; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He hath saved us." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." All these Scriptures set forth the salvation of the believer as an accomplished fact.

But how is this true? We may illustrate. The captive may be released from prison and his fetters broken off, and yet he may be a long distance from home. His rightful sovereign may have overcome his captor and constrained him to relinquish his hold on him forever. Still as he travels homeward through the enemies' land, he may meet with many difficulties, he may often be annoyed and hindered in his progress by those who wish him evil, although they dare not take away his life. So it is with the believer. The great captain of his salvation has opened his prison doors, broken the chains by which he was bound, constrained the mighty one who held him in bondage to relinquish his hold, and secured for

him a safe passage to the land of his deliverer. Still, his journey is through an unfriendly world. He is encompassed by enemies on every side: without are fightings, within are fears. True, he is assured that as his day is, so shall his strength be. The promise is "my grace shall be sufficient for thee." "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee." Yet must He walk by faith, not by sight. And as he moves on, we hear his song of trial and faith:

> "Here in this body pent,
> Absent from Thee I roam,
> Yet nightly pitch my tent,
> A day's march nearer home."

Nearer to his Father's house, he every moment comes. He is a delivered captive and secure from the prevailing power of his adversary, but not entirely freed from his annoyance. Satan is eager to worry whom he cannot devour. His life is safe, although if need be he is often in heaviness through manifold temptations.

The condition of the believer may be compared, while in this world, to a man afflicted with a disease under the treatment of a physician who has skill and power to heal; under his treatment, the disease is broken; yet it may be many months before he is fully recovered. The believer is saved as being delivered from the power of his adversary, and relieved from the power of his disease. The good work begun by God will be

carried on unto perfect accomplishment. God will not forsake the gracious work of His own hands.

The author of this salvation is God, as is evident from the connection of the text. "Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God who hath saved us." God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are in their personal distinction as well as in their divine essence concerned in this salvation. "The Father Himself loveth you," said the Savior to His disciples. Again He said, "all that the Father hath given me shall come to me;" and still further, "I pray not for the world but for them which thou hast given me out of the world." The Father then chose the objects of salvation and gave them for redemption to the Son. The Son redeems and preserves them. Hence Christ speaks, saying, "I lay down my life for the sheep." And hence the apostle says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." And again, "ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." And again, "neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby ye must be saved." Again, "If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Hence Christ says, "Of those whom thou hast given me

I have lost none." "I pray not for the world but for those thou hast given me out of the world." And again, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." But further, those chosen by the Father and redeemed by the Son are renewed by the Spirit. Hence it is said, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He hath saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost:" and the apostolic benediction invokes "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost." Hence it is said, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit," and "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Salvation then is of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Hence says the apostle Peter, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through santification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

Such then is the nature of the believer's present salvation, and such is the author. With such a beginning, by such an author, we may be assured of its full and perfect consummation. "Who hath saved us;" saved in the purpose and by the wonder-working power of God.

2. But we notice, in the second place, the means of it: "Called with an holy calling."

By a holy calling, we may understand a call to holiness, or a call made effectual in producing holiness. There is an outward call common in some aspects of it to all men, and there is an inward call which is effectual unto salvation. To some, the Gospel comes in word only; to others, in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. "Many are called but few chosen." Many have the outward call whose hearts remain closed against the truth.

God calls in the work of creation. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handy work." "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." If men see the works of God in creation, and adore Him not as a being of eternal power, they are without excuse.

There is moreover an utterance for God in the conscience of men. "For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another." They then who reject the teaching of this work of the law in their hearts, cannot be guiltless.

God calls by His providence — in His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing

all His creatures and all their actions. God's providence speaks to us in the existence and history of families, nations, states and empires: in our own existence, preservation and history: in our adversity and prosperity, our health and sickness. It was a saying of a good man, "that he who looked for great providences, would have great providences to observe." There is a voice of providence in every thing that befalls us and goes to make up our history. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Hence we should say in every projected enterprise, "If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that." Hence in every success we should say with Nehemiah, "According to the good hand of our God that was upon us." Hence we are taught to magnify the works of God which men behold. The voice of God in His providence demands our attention, our reverence and obedience. The goodness of God should lead us to repentance: from His judgments we should learn righteousness. The calls of God's providence are constant, loud, solemn and impressive. They meet us in all the lanes and avenues of life, and bid us consider our dependence, our duty and our interest. All these call to holiness.

But more especially God calls men by His Word and Gospel. The blessed Bible is full of communications from God to man, all having, either remotely or directly, a bearing upon his

spiritual interests. Here is set forth the great plan of salvation: man in his state of innocence: his state of sin, of grace and glory.

The Gospel is preached. "The Lord gave the Word and great is the multitude that publish it." He has given some apostles, some prophets, some ministers and teachers. The call is made in the high places, at the gates of the city, at the entering in of the doors. "Unto you O men I call, and My voice is to the sons of men." Thus far we may regard the call as outward. To many it goes no further. It is a message that plays around the head but comes not to the heart. To some, it commends itself to their reason and conscience, but they plead the pressing claims of other things. The farm, the stock, the merchandise, or the family relation is in the way. That the Word may become effectual unto salvation, there needs a spiritual agency. "The Spirit of God maketh the reading but especially the preaching of the Word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners." A Paul may plant, an Apollos water but the increase must be of God. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." The ground must be prepared, or else the seed is sown in vain.

There must be an inward call: a voice that penetrates the heart, in order to salvation. God opened the heart of Lydia and she attended to the things spoken by the apostle Paul. God

makes His people willing in the day of His power. But God in the economy of His grace has a place for the use of means. Hence in connection with the outward call the Spirit of God is often poured out, and great multitudes become obedient unto the faith. You perceive then there is both an outward and inward call. Both have their place; but the outward without the inward is not saving. Two men may sit together under the sound of the same Gospel sermon. The one hears as though he heard not. He is unmoved by the earnest and solemn truths pressed upon his attention. The other is greatly affected. The truths of God seem like barbed arrows piercing his very soul. His spirit is stirred within him. He seems to stand upon the verge of a burning lake. He sees the storm of divine wrath fearfully gathering over his head. In astonishment and trembling he cries, "what must I do to be saved?" He feels that he cannot rest until he has hope for his perishing soul. Now, why the difference? They both have the outward call; but only the latter, the inward, the holy calling of the text. The outward call may be as the voice of a charmer, charming never so wisely, or as the voice of one that can play well upon an instrument, or as the tones of a Boanerges, a son of thunder, or as the voice of a comforter melting and sweet, and still leave the hearer without any saving impression. But if there be the inward call of the Holy Spirit working

down into the inmost recesses of the heart and carrying the truth there, then it becomes effectual to salvation. This may be in connection with truth very imperfectly delivered. It may be by means of reflections awakened from some very ordinary occurrence: it may be by the consideration of the works of creation, or providence, the workings of conscience, or directly in connection with the Word of God read or preached. The Spirit of God uses all these various instrumentalities as pleaseth Him.

Now it is true that the way of salvation must be unfolded to the mind, at least of those capable of understanding it, in order to its acceptance: for asks the apostle, "how can they believe on Him of whom they have not heard"? This, creation, conscience or providence does not do; yet, where there is a general knowledge of the way as laid down in God's Word, creation, conscience, and providence may be the means of calling it to remembrance. Thus the calls of these may by the Spirit's operation become effectual. "Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, He doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the Gospel."

Without this work of God's Spirit upon the heart, no outward call results in holiness to the

Lord. But not so, the inward call by the divine Spirit. Its efficiency does not depend upon any outward circumstance. The Spirit of God can reach and savingly impress the heart, even though it may be incapable of hearing the call of creation, providence or the Gospel. He can renew the heart of the infant or idiot. His work of sanctification can reach the infant at its birth; and herein lies the ground of our faith in their salvation. Mankind are all born children of wrath—conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity: many die in infancy, and some are idiotic and cannot receive the outward call. Their salvation therefore depends exclusively upon the inward work. Are infants dying in infancy called with this holy calling, this call producing holiness? We know that God by His Holy Spirit is able to fit them for heaven. He can recast their sinful nature in a heavenly mould.

We know that the Savior, when upon earth, said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of heaven." It is the opinion of many that the Kingdom of heaven here means the Church on earth, and that Christ here teaches that the infants of parents professedly in covenant with God are embraced within its pale. But why so, unless, when dying in infancy, there is a place prepared for them in heaven?

But further, when God took the infant son of David, King of Israel, he took comfort in the ex-

pectation of going unto him, saying, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." Now that he did not mean simply the state of the dead, is evident from his conduct upon the death of Absalom. Then he wept and refused to be comforted. Why the difference, unless in the former case he expected to meet his babe in the better land, while in the latter case, from the character of Absalom, he could have no such expectation. Infants dying in infancy therefore, we think, are saved, being called with a holy calling even the inward calling of God's Spirit, and thus made meet for heaven. But we pass to notice,

3. The foundation of this salvation: "Not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace."

Not according to our works done in Adam. In him we had our trial and miserably failed. Man, being left to the freedom of his own will, fell from the state in which he was created by sinning against God. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." Our works in Adam brought condemnation and death. We are not then saved according to our works in Adam.

Nor is salvation according to our works personally performed before conversion. In us, by nature, there dwells no good thing. The Scriptures speak of us "as dead in trespasses and sins." "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not

one." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God." Our works then before conversion, are not the foundation of our salvation.

Nor are our own works after our conversion the foundation of our salvation. For even then in many things we offend all, and in every thing we come short. 'All our own righteousnesses are but as filthy rags.' The best of men are constrained to say, "I find then a law that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. The good that I would I do not."

"Not according to our works"—our works and our salvation do not accord—our works accord with condemnation—our works do not merit salvation.

By our works, we are to understand the exercises of our minds and bodies in distinction from the work of the Spirit of grace in us. In the work of salvation, God is said to work in the believer "to will and to do of His good pleasure." Hence the people of God are in another place represented as saying, "thou hast wrought all our works in us." "In efficacious grace," says the discriminating Edwards, "we are not merely passive, nor yet does God do some and we do the rest; but God does all, and we do all. God produces all, and we act all; for that is what He produces, namely our own acts. God is the only proper author and founda-

tion; we only are the proper actors. We are in different aspects wholly passive and wholly active." The works then pertaining to salvation are, in one aspect, the works of God wrought in us. There are however, if we may so say, two departments of works in regard to our salvation; works wrought in us by the agency of the Holy Spirit, and works wrought without us by Jesus Christ. It is of the latter specially that the text speaks, and yet it is not to be overlooked that the works wrought in the believer by the divine Spirit are provided for and secured by the work of Christ.

We are saved according to God's purpose and grace. Some would have us believe that election to salvation is of foreseen good works; but this the text disproves. It originates in the Sovereign purpose of God: "For whom He did foreknow them also He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son."

Salvation is according to the purpose of God, without any thing foreseen in the creature as conditions or causes moving Him thereto. In God's own purpose is found the origin and cause of salvation to any man.

It is not of works, but of grace. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God." This grace we see embraces faith, and, we may further add, all the means pertaining to salvation. Grace does not destroy justice but provides for its satisfaction; hence it does

not make void the law, but establishes it. The claims of law and justice are more highly honored in the sufferings and death of Christ for their satisfaction, than if every guilty soul should endure the torments of hell forever.

Nor does grace discourage the use of means, but provides for their becoming efficacious. The Spirit of God maketh the reading and hearing of the Word effectual to salvation. It is said to be a tenet of the Hopkinsian theory to denounce the use of means in the case of the unregenerate; but grace teaches even the blinded soul to feel after God if haply he may find Him; and Peter taught even Simon Magus whom he declared to be in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity 'to pray, if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him.' Salvation, according to God's purpose and grace, does not exclude means, nor does it exclude the lively exercise of all the Christian graces in the soul; but it secures them. In this way of salvation is found their life and power. They are not works of the flesh, and thus our works; but works of the Spirit; and though wrought in us and securing our activity, are, both in their origin and energy, the work of God's purpose and grace —"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

IV. This brings us to notice, in the fourth and last place, the security of this salvation : "Given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

It is then in accordance with precious and gracious design originating before the beginning of the world. The covenant of grace was in operation before the revelation of the covenant of works to man in the garden of Eden. The deed was made and committed, so to speak, to the keeping of Christ prior to the creation of man: "given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." What was given? God's purpose and grace in relation to the salvation of His people.

Not given us in Adam. In him was manifested the insufficiency of human stability. The trial did not deceive the Creator. He knew what was in man. But in Adam, He made known how weak and insufficient was man, in his best estate, to secure his salvation. Even when his soul was alive, he failed to keep it so; and if in his estate of sinless perfection, he was unable to preserve the holiness of his nature, much less in his present condition, can he hope to regain it, or, if conferred upon him again, be sufficient to retain it. No man can keep alive his own soul. The believer, therefore, is declared to be "kept by the mighty power of God, through faith unto salvation." The salvation of the child of God is not entrusted to his own hands. The pious John Newton tells us how he was taught this in a dream of the night. In

his dream, he seemed to be in the harbor of Venice, in great distress, because of the dangers that seemed to threaten him on every side. Wherever he turned his eyes, destruction stared him in the face. In this peril, he was accosted by a person who, seeing his great affliction, gave him a ring, and informed him that so long as he kept that ring, he would be safe from fear of evil. Upon receiving it he found that the dangers around him disappeared. All was peaceful and calm, and he felt very happy. After awhile, he was met by another person who accused him of great folly, in ascribing such advantage to a ring, and who persuaded him to throw it away, and finally succeeded in inducing him to drop it overboard. No sooner had he done this, than all his terrors returned upon him, flames of fire seemed to burst forth from all quarters, and he was thrown into such an agony of distress as seemed almost insupportable. In this condition, either a third person or the first approached, and inquired into his case. He gave a full statement of his conduct; upon which the person, asking where he had dropped the ring, immediately plunged in and brought it up. No sooner had this been done than all his distress departed. The scene around was relieved of the terrible appearances, and all was quiet. He immediately approached his deliverer with the expectation of receiving the ring; but the other told him no, that

he was unfit to have it in his own keeping and might again be induced to cast it away, but that he would keep it for him.

This may illustrate the history of humanity. Salvation was put into the hands of our first father; but at the instigation of Satan he cast it away and involved himself in ruin. Jesus Christ has wrought out for His people a deliverance, and holds it in His own hands: "Given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." The believer is kept, not by his own strength, but by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

"Given us in Christ." Jesus Christ undertakes to reconcile the salvation of sinners with the holiness and justice of God. His purpose and grace must harmonize with His nature and law. Hence the security of salvation to His people must depend upon the certainty of Christ's fulfilling the undertaking? It is given us in Christ. Can He meet the necessary demand? Will He certainly effect it? He is not a man that He should fail. In Him, divinity is manifested. He is the mighty God—mighty to save. God, in view of His undertaking, says, "Deliver them from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom."

We see here how the salvation of the believer harmonizes with the character of God. The plan of it is such that mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other. God is just, while He is the justifier of him that

believeth in Jesus. Salvation is of God, and in such a way as accords with all the attributes of His holy nature.

"Who hath saved us." We see here the place of means. "Called with a holy calling." That call sounds all along our pathway. It is uttered by Creation, by Providence, by Conscience, by the Gospel, but is effectual to salvation only as energized by the Holy Spirit. Then it becomes the "power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation." The call is to holiness; but effectual in producing it only when accompanied by the energy of the Holy Spirit: "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Means are neither ends nor causes, but simply means; they occupy their place between the cause and the effect. Hence all our efforts should be made in reliance upon the divine Spirit. Without this, a Paul may plant and Apollos water in vain.

We see here the design of the Gospel. It is to make ready a people for God. Its call is to holiness. Its great design is not accomplished by any thing short of entire consecration to God. Hence says the Savior, "sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth." "Called with a holy calling, that our fruit may be unto holiness and the end everlasting life."

Again: we see here the worthlessness of all works as to salvation that are not wrought in God. Human nature cannot restore the dead to life;

cannot, by any power of its own, work the works of God. Hence says the Apostle, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Works of the flesh are our own works; works of the Spirit wrought in us are not our own. Hence it is said that we are saved, not according to our works, but according to the purpose and grace of God. His purpose selects the persons, and His grace produces in them the fruits meet for repentance. He is the Author and Finisher of all true faith, and if we love Him, it is because His love is shed abroad in our hearts by His Spirit that dwelleth in us.

We see here the far-reaching character of the plan of salvation, given us in Christ before the world began. It originated with God away back of the formation of the world, or man to inhabit it. Hence God's love to His people, is said to be an everlasting love. In the counsels of eternity all that pertains to salvation, its objects, the plan, the instrumentality, the result, is all arranged. "Known unto God are all His works from the foundation of the world.

We see here that this plan of salvation excludes all others. The text destroys all hope from works of our own: it shuts us up therefore to the plan of grace. It centers all upon the purpose and grace of God. Here then is our only hope. We can

only lie down in the dust, and cry 'God be merciful unto us sinners.' "Save, Lord, or we perish." We can only beseech God, for Christ's sake, to work in us by His Holy Spirit. With fear and trembling it becomes us to cry, "work in us," O Lord, to will and to do that thus we may work out own salvation. "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

VII.

1 Thes. iv : 3—"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification."

THE immediate connection of the text directs attention to purity in regard to our bodily members; but all defilement possessing a moral character, involves the soul. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." The body is but the instrument, the soul is the actuating principle. "Not that which entereth into the mouth," said the blessed Savior, "defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the heart." It is not enough to cleanse the outside of the cup and platter; but attention must be given to that which is within. If we would have the house well kept, we must have a careful tenant. It is however of advantage to avoid outward expression of the sinful feeling. A plant without light and air will soon die out: so if every evil thought and impure emotion be promptly suppressed, their power will be weakened, and eventually by the grace of God their life destroyed.

The body is defiled by sin, because inhabited by a sinful soul. Apart from the soul, it is but dust of the earth, and soon moulders back to its native

element. The soul must be renewed after the divine image by the Spirit of God, before it can be fitted for heaven. This is done in such a way as that it never ceases the exercise of its faculties. God has indeed so made it that it is essentially active. The body, on the other hand, is active, only as it is acted upon. We dwell in houses of clay, yet it is called, and truly, a vile body. This is in accordance with our mode of speaking, when we designate a *house* or *place*, as vile and wicked. We have alas, yielded our bodies as instruments of unrighteousness, and its members to deeds unclean. Yet, even the body may be the subject of a complete revolution in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, as the bodies of the saints, which shall be alive at the sound of the last trump, will be. But in regard to the bodies of God's people, generally, they will be dealt with as the house in which was found the plague of the leprosy. They will be entirely broken down and turned to dust. But here the analogy ceases; for the bodies of the saints will be raised in spiritual soundness and beauty. Christ shall change the vile bodies of His people, that they may be fashioned like unto His own glorious body. Not until then will they be sanctified wholly. Then,

"Arrayed in glorious grace,
Shall these vile bodies shine;
And every feature, every face,
Look heavenly and divine."

We see that the sanctification of the bodies of God's people ordinarily, is, by a long process.

But we design more especially to speak of the sanctification of the soul, and yet not altogether excluding the body. The Apostle Paul in this same epistle prays, "that the God of peace would sanctify them wholly, and that their whole body, soul and spirit, might be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And, says the text, "this is the will of God even your sanctification."

Let us then consider.

I. The Scriptural doctrine of the believer's sanctification.

II. The agency in it, together with the necessity, motives, means to, and end of it.

III. The evidences of its progress.

I. The nature of it. The word "sanctify" in Scripture means, frequently, to set apart from a common to a sacred use. The idea is that of entire consecration to the service of God. Thus the sanctuary with its furniture, its vessels and its ministers, priests and their attendants, were sanctified, or set apart to the divine service. Thus we are commanded to sanctify the Sabbath; thus, to hallow the name of the Lord; thus, the people of Israel, in general, were the Lord's people, and sanctified, or set apart to His service, and thus, from time to time, they were specially called upon to sanctify themselves, as at the receiving of the law, and at the

passover. They were to divert themselves, as far as in them lay, from all ordinary worldly labors, anxieties, and pleasures, at other times right and proper, that they might set their hearts upon God and His service without distraction.

These sanctifications were in general, connected with some special external formalites, although, in regard to human beings, they did not exclude exercises of the spirit. Indeed, these external formalities were intended as symbols and helps to inward purity.

The sanctification of the text, however, refers to an inward work, affecting the moral character of the soul.

Those sanctifications of which we have spoken, were designed, indeed, by outward exercises to produce, by the divine blessing, a purifying effect within. They were instrumentalities, by God appointed, to be used by men. The sanctification of which we now would speak, is the work of God Himself upon the soul, and designed to affect, by an inward operation, the entire exercises of the whole man. It is not simply an outward consecration to God, but an inward assimilation. Not simply the setting apart to a holy use, but the production and nurturing of a holy nature. Sanctification, in the sense of the text, is the process of making holy.

It differs from justification. Justification refers mainly to legal relations, and is therefore a judi-

cial act: while sanctification refers to moral character, and is a work of transformation, by the renewing of the mind, after the image of God. Justification results from the imputation, the setting down to our account, of the perfect righteousness of Christ; while sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit within. Justification, being an act, is complete at once, and does not admit of degrees: while sanctification, being a work, may be more or less complete. All true believers are equal in regard to justification; but all are not equal in regard to the progress of the work of sanctification. "Sanctification," says our excellent Catechism, is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man, after the image of God, and are enabled more and more, to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness." "Sanctification," in its complete is an entire conformity of heart and life, in thought, word and deed, to the law of God. "Sanctification," says Bishop Usher, "is no less than for a man to be brought to an entire resignation to the will of God; and to live in the offering up of his soul continually in the flames of love, as a whole burnt-offering to Christ." It is, in all ordinary cases, a gradual work. The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The work of God's Spirit in the heart, is like leaven hid in meal. It is progressive in its operation, going on until the whole is leavened. It is like the growth of seed, cast into the ground,

first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. It is begun in regeneration, then the seed is sown, the principle implanted. That is the birth into the kingdom of God's dear Son, the beginning of the saving exercises of the power of the Spirit upon the soul. Then there is a growth in grace, an advancement in the divine life. "Hence, as new-born babes, the new-born child of God desires the sincere milk of the Word"—the "milk"— that which is easy of digestion, easy to be understood, and of plain, practical importance— "that it may grow thereby." The language of the Psalmist, describes them, "Lord," said he, "my heart is not haughty, neither are mine eyes lofty, neither do I exercise myself in things too high for me."

When you see a young convert more concerned about difficult doctrines than plain duties, it argues unfavorably for his discretion. It is not good for the young child to eat much very strong food.

But there is a growth, an advance to the "fullness of the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus." Sanctification pertains to the whole man. True godliness is a spiritual formation of beautiful symmetry. It is like the principle of life in a healthful body. The child of God "groweth up into Him in all things which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in

the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, to the edifying of itself in love."

As the depravity in the natural man is total, that is, affecting every part, so the work of God's Spirit in counteracting that depravity, extends also to every part, every faculty and function of the soul. Hence, the old man is crucified, and dies daily, and the new man is renewed, day by day. In the natural operation of human life, there is constant waste and supply. When the body is seriously diseased, the waste is greater than the supply, and thus, there is a loss of vitality, and the man weakens and dies. And this, as to the natural body, must sooner or later be the result. In a healthful body, at least, previous to maturity, the supply exceeds the waste, and there is growth. This principle is illustrated in sickness and recovery. In the one, the balance is against recuperation, and the body wastes away: in the other case, the balance is in favor of recuperation, and the body increases in vigor. This, as it seems to me, is an apt illustration of the working of spiritual death and spiritual life in the soul. "Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." This is the natural, and, unless counteracted, the constant tendency of unrenewed nature. The leprosy of sin upon the soul, works on to eternal death. On the other hand, in the heart renewed, there is a tendency to greater strength. They go from strength to strength.

The water given by Christ in the washing of regeneration, becomes a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life. The believer in Christ shall never die. "He that believeth ont he Son hath everlasting life." "He shall never perish." He is renewed in the whole man. Divine grace, in regeneration, touches and sets anew every spring of the soul. The understanding, conscience, will, and affections, all receive a principle of life, and act accordingly. And this, too, after a glorious model, the image of God—and that old image, inwrought at first, but broken and defaced by reason of the fall—that image consisting in knowledge, righteousness and holiness. There is imparted a knowledge of God, and a desire for more. "This is eternal life, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." This desire seeks a supply, and turns to the Word of God, that it may feed upon its precious instructions concerning its Author, and the way of life through His Son. And as the knowledge of God and of the soul's relation to Him, increases, there is clearer perception of duty, of the evil of sin, and the beauty of holiness. Hence, there is a growing conformity to the law of God, a renewal of moral rectitude, and a constant advance toward perfect holiness, "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Hence, says the Apostle, "we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of God, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit

of our God." We die more and more unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

But a question has been much discussed upon this subject, and that is this—"Is entire sanctification attainable in this life?" Our view, as already set forth is, that it is a gradual work, but not fully completed in the believer until death. *That*, in our view, gives the last fatal stroke to sin, and the Christian, like his Master, triumphs in dying.

There are those, however, who say that complete sanctification is attainable to the believer in this present life.

We remark, that the declarations and history of the best men that have ever lived, sets forth, that they had not reached it. Paul, the great Apostle to the Gentiles, may be regarded as not a whit behind, in Christian attainment, the best of men that have ever lived. When we contemplate his zeal for God, and his seasons of wonderful communion with the Most High, being even caught up to the third heaven, and enjoying such fellowship with the Holy Trinity, as to be unable to decide whether he was in the body or out of the body, that wonderful man who was in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which was far better, who could say, "for me to live is Christ, but to die is gain"—even Paul speaks of himself as one "that had not attained, and was not already made perfect." And in another place he says, "that

when he would do good, evil was present," while he was pressing forward to the mark of the prize of his high calling, but he had not yet reached it. The beloved John, who leaned upon the Savior's bosom, was certainly a man of high Christian attainment. He was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and received wonderful manifestations of the glorious presence and power of his divine Master; and yet he says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

Noah is spoken of as a man, perfect in his generation, and one who walked with God, and yet he had not attained to complete sanctification, for he was on one occasion guilty of intoxication.

Job was said to be perfect, and yet we hear him say of God, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." "Behold," says he again, "I am vile, what shall I answer? I will lay my hand upon my mouth." Abraham was a man of strong faith, and was called the friend of God, and yet it is recorded of him, that he was guilty of falsehood. David was called the "man after God's own heart," and yet he was involved in the awful crimes of adultery and murder.

The most pious men that have lived, have ever been ready to say, "In many things we offend all, and in everything we come short." Thus it was with such men as Baxter, Doddridge, Henry, Scott,

Bunyan, Payson, and McCheyne. Now if such persons as these, so famed for their piety, in Scripture and in the history of God's people, did not attain to this state of complete sanctification, it is fair to infer that it has not been attained by any others. And if no mere man since the fall has been able in this life to keep the commandments of the Lord perfectly, but has daily broken them in thought, word and deed, it is fair to infer that sinless perfection, or complete sanctification, is in this life unattainable.

But do not the Scriptures command entire sanctification? Do they not say, "be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." "Be ye holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy?"

We answer; the commandments of God are the standard of duty; but are not the measure of our attainments; or even of our capacity of attainment in this present life. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy," says the Apostle, and "just and good; but I am carnal, sold under sin. What then? is the law made void? not at all." It presents to us the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus, and bids us so run, that we may obtain. We may not obtain in a day, or a month, or a year; but we are to keep the end in view, and through grace we shall at last come off "conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Him that hath loved us, and given Him-

self for us, that He might sanctify us to Himself." "He will present His people at last without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." The view that we take of those passages commanding, or promising entire sanctification is, that they are compatible with the idea that entire sanctification is gradually approached by the believer, and reached only, but surely, at the end of his race. It is the completion of his warfare, the final fruit of all his toil.

This we may further argue from the fact, that, as long as he lives, he is subject to suffering. Now, the sufferings of the child of God are a discipline, whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and for their profit, that they may be partakers of His holiness. Now, a state of entire sanctification would require no further chastisement. Hence, to such it would be no mark of a Father's love. Hence, if Christians suffer to the last, it argues that they are not previously perfectly sanctified. Where there is no sin, there cannot be, in the government of a righteous God, any place for suffering.

Again, we are taught to pray for the forgiveness of our sins as habitually as for our daily bread. Hence, we argue, that so long as the body needs bread, there is need of forgiveness, and if there is need of forgiveness, there is not complete sanctification.

But it is argued that the Apostle John declares, "whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him, so that he cannot sin, because he is born of God." To this we reply:

This is the same Apostle who says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Now we know that the Scriptures do not contradict themselves. Hence, the first quotation must be consistent with the last. It cannot, therefore, mean entire sanctification, or absolute freedom from all sin. Most commentators therefore, consider the teaching to be, that the truly regenerated man cannot so sin as finally to perish. There is implanted within him the seed of a gracious principle, which preserves him from final apostasy. He cannot sin as an unregenerate man. The lamb may fall into the ditch, but it will not wallow in the mire. Like Joseph, the true Christian will say to temptation, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin againt God;" or, like Peter, he will so be brought to think of it as to go out and weep bitterly. Such a view is consistent with the teachings of Scripture, and the recorded experience of God's people.

Another argument is, that otherwise the death of a Christian would be less a blessing.

Paul could say, "in this body we groan," and again, "to die is gain," "to be with Christ is far better." Now, if entire sanctification were secured in this life, there would be little more to hope for; but, says the Psalmist, "as for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness." There was something to hope for: himself made perfect by righteousness,

he would rejoice in the beatific vision and in his conformity to the image of God. Such, in our view, is the nature of the believer's sanctification. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He (Christ) shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

II. As to the agency in the work of sanctification, its very nature calls for a power divine. Nothing less can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. Hence, it is written, "Thus saith the Lord God, I gave them My Sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." "Know ye not," says the Apostle to the Corinthians, "that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves, with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor rivilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." The Apostle Jude addresses his epistle to those "who are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus." Of Jesus Christ it is said, that "He is made of God unto every one that believeth, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." And the blessed Savior prayed to God the Father, "to sanctify those who had already believed, or

should believe, on Him through the truth." And as to the Holy Spirit, believers are said to "be elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience." Thus we see that the Scripture not only ascribes the work of sanctification unto God, but specially designates each person in the godhead, as personally working to this end.

As to the necessity of sanctification, the Word of God is express; "without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." Into the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, there shall in no wise, enter anything that defileth. Moreover, such is the nature of the enjoyment of heaven, that no unholy creature could be happy there. God, we are told, is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, that is, to favor it, it must everywhere meet His frown." "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

But in the work of sanctification, in its progress, the renewed soul is an active participant. Hence, the command, "sanctify yourselves, therefore, and be ye holy; for I, the Lord your God, am holy." "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure."

Herein is found a place for the use of means. Hence, says the Savior, "sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth." And to us He saith, "search the Scriptures, for in them ye think

ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me." And again, "let the Word of truth dwell in you richly." Hence, the Psalmist says, "through Thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way." And again, "Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee." God's Word is itself a great instrumentality, and on it we depend for all our knowledge of all else that we can call means of grace. They are so, solely because God has appointed them to be such, and revealed them unto us in His holy Word. Such are Sabbaths, and sanctuaries, the law of God, religious worship, public and private, the ordinances of God's house; preaching and hearing of the Word, the sacraments, prayer and praise, fasting, alms-giving, obedience, good works and the spiritual warfare, and all else whereby God has instructed us to inquire after Him, and to draw nigh unto Him. These are means to be employed by us. Add to these, afflictions, trials, losses, crosses, and all the varied providences of God toward us, which we are to strive to improve, to the glory of God, in the furtherance of our sanctification. In all this we need the gracious operations of the divine Spirit. "The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching, of the Word an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation."

As motives to strive after greater attainments in the divine life, we may mention, The will of God; "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." It tends to the glory of God. It is the reproduction of His own glorious image upon the heart. It is the kindling up of a light within, leading to good works, that men, seeing them, may be led to glorify God.

It conduces to our happiness. We advance in happiness as we progress towards holiness. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." It is the steady weakening, within our souls, of the power of sin which is the cause and fountain of all our misery.

Its end is to assimilate us to the character of God. He is holy, and the more we advance towards holiness, the more we resemble Him. Hence, as we advance in sanctification, the more precious will be to us all the means of grace, the better shall we enjoy the communion of God's people, and the higher shall we appreciate the exercises of the house of the Lord. Thus shall we be better enabled to say,

> "Beyond my highest joy,
> I prize her heavenly ways;
> Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
> Her hymns of constant praise."

It tends to fit us for heaven, for association with holy angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect. Indeed, it is the consummation, in its

completion, of the great end of our being, which is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever. It is the coming up to the measure of the stature of the fullness of the perfect man in Christ Jesus. It is the meeting of the will of God concerning His people. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification."

III. As to the evidences of the progress of sanctification in the renewed soul, we may notice a growing hatred to sin, and an increasing desire unto holiness. The old man is crucified, and the new man is renewed day by day.

> "They that would grow divinely wise,
> Must with His fear begin;
> Our fairest proof of knowledge lies
> In hating every sin."

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." "They die more and more unto sin and live unto righteousness." There is an increased tenderness of conscience in regard to sins of omission, as well as of commission; a more sensitive shrinking back from the appearance of evil as well as a more resolute denial of all ungodliness and worldly lusts.

There is, moreover, increased faithfulness in the discharge of all Christian duties, private, domestic, social and public. They move forward in the divine life in more regular and constant step, and less by sudden impulse. Their strength to resist evil and to perform duty, is increased. "They that wait on the Lord renew their strength."

They have an increase of love for God's people and a readiness to make greater sacrifices for the promotion of His cause, both as relates to the conversion of sinners and the edification of the godly.

There is, further, increased readiness to submit in all things to God, and cheerfully await His disposal of ourselves, and all that pertains unto us. While they learn more and more of the sweetness of lying passive in His hands, and knowing no will but His.

Our present condition is a growing state. Either, we are as tares more and more developing our true character, and ripening for the burning; or, we are as the wheat, more and more ripening for the blessed garner of the Lord. Whither, oh! whither, dying man, are your steps tending? Whither, oh! whither is the stream of your life bearing you? Oh, dying sinner, hear the Word of God—"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his evil way, and live": "turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye die?" "May the God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole body, soul and spirit may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

VIII.

John v: 24—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. That this is true, is proved by the miracles they wrought in the name of the Lord, and by the fulfillment of the remarkable predictions they uttered. But the proofs of the divine mission and character of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ are far more abundant and remarkable.

All that pertained to His birth was miraculous. "He was heir of all things," saith the Scripture. To Him the types and prophecies largely referred, and, in Him, had their fulfillment.

John the Baptist testified of Him, saying: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." "This is He of whom I spake; 'After me cometh a man who is preferred before me,' for He was before me."

Angels testified for Him at His birth to the shepherds, also at His resurrection and ascension. God, the Father, testified for Him in a voice from

heaven at His baptism, at the grave of Lazarus, and on the mount of transfiguration. The Holy Spirit witnessed for Him at His baptism, descending from heaven like a dove, and resting upon Him. His own works bore witness for Him. The miracles He wrought were more stupendous and frequent than those of any other. Blessed be God for the abundant evidence given us of the truth of the mission, claims and character of our Lord and Savior. There is testimony, human, angelic, and divine — testimony from things animate and inanimate, from the past and ever-changing present.

The text came directly from His gracious lips. To it, we surely do well to take heed. It speaks in words demanding special attention, for it comes with a double affirmation: "Verily, verily,"—"assuredly, assuredly,"—"I say unto you." It sets forth some of the characteristics of the true believer, and the certainty of his salvation.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." Let us consider —

I. The characteristics of the true believer.

II. The certainty of his final salvation.

The characteristics, as here stated, are — 1. He heareth the words of Christ. 2. He believeth on Him that sent Him. 3. Is passed from death unto life.

1. Of the hearing, we may say, it is not merely that of the ear.

The hearing of some, the Savior compares to seed sown on the wayside. Satan catcheth it up. It does not lay hold of the understanding. It may be as the sound of an instrument, well played, but it is not productive of saving benefits. The hearing of others is compared to seed sown on stony ground. It produces some effect upon the emotions. The hearers are moved for the moment, or for a little while, but its effects are transient. Like the morning cloud and early dew, it soon vanishes away. The breath of temptation, or the blast of persecution, destroys all the promise.

The hearing of others, is compared to seed sown on thorny ground. They are hopefully affected also for a time, but the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches are allowed to choke off the promised development. It is not such hearing of the words of Christ that constitutes the true believer, but it is that of those who hear the word and understand it: they who receive the word into good and honest hearts: they who see in them the way of life, and are led, in the exercise of faith and patience, to bring forth the fruits of righteousness. These endure, and inherit the blessing. Hence, says the word of wisdom: "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates: waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me, findeth life, and

shall obtain favor of the Lord." He so heareth the word of God as that it becomes the power of God unto salvation. He is not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the word.

2. And "believeth on Him that sent Him." Here, too, we must bear in mind that there are differences in what is termed faith, or believing. The devils believe that there is one God, but not unto salvation. The true believer so believes in God, as to draw near to Him in prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, not only believing that He is, but also, that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. So the persecuting Saul, believing in God, cried: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The true believer believes in God as the prodigal son in his father, so as to say, a 'place in his family is far more desirable than my present condition. Even the humblest there are well supplied, and here I perish with hunger.' "I will arise and go unto my father, and will say unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." The faith of the true believer leads him to God with all the wretchedness of his destitute condition — with all his guilt, trusting in His mercy, through Christ, to obtain pardon, and find grace to help; according to his need. He believes that God so loved the world, as to give His only begotton Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not per-

ish, but have everlasting life. He has faith in Him who sent Christ, believing that, in acting according to the instructions of Christ, in going to the Father, he shall not be cast out. He says: "He that spared not His own Son, but freely gave Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?" He has faith in Gospel invitations, Gospel offers of pardon, and Gospel promises of grace and support, and final salvation.

3. Another characteristic of the true believer, as mentioned in the text is, that he has passed from death unto life. This implies, not only a deliverance from a state of condemnation to a state of justification, but, beyond this, a change of nature. He is quickened from a death in trespasses and sins, to a life of righteousness. "You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins." This work is of the agency of the Spirit. Hence, the true believer is said "to be born of the Spirit;" "to be created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" "risen with Him through faith of the operation of God." He is said to be translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. A new heart has been given unto him, and a new spirit put within him. It is a great work, a work performed by a great Agent, a work provided for by a great plan, devised by infinite wisdom — a work great in its execution. It is no less than the dispossessing Satan, the strong man, of his spoils in the heart

of man, and the making of that heart a temple of the Holy Ghost. It is the cleansing the fountain of pollution, and the causing to flow from it henceforth, the healthful streams of purity, piety, and love. Henceforth, there is a dying unto sin and a living unto righteousness; a denying themselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and a living soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world. The true believer has peace with God. His work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of it, quietness and assurance forever. He lives a new life. "I am crucified with Christ," he says, "nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." "Christ liveth in me." He is a partaker of the divine nature or disposition. His union is to a risen Savior. He shares in His resurrected life, and, as Christ being raised dieth no more, so of those united to Him. The things which he once regarded as his gain, he now accounts as loss, for Christ. His affections are set on things at the right hand of God, where Christ sitteth, and not on things on the earth. His treasure is in heaven, his heart is there, and there is his home. He has passed the boundary which separates the territory of death and life. The streams of influence and desire flow in a different direction. He follows the waters which flow out of the sanctuary, and

they deepen rapidly in his progress, and living trees, bearing blessed fruits, to nourish Christian graces, are found along the banks. Blessed ordinances, precious promises, and gracious experiences are there; the end is a sea of glory, and to it he hastens. Here, he has no continuing city, but he seeks one to come, having foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

My hearers, the true believer has actually passed from death unto life. It may be life in a very feeble state — life in the babe; or, it may be stronger, life in the young man. "I have written unto you," says the apostle John, "young men, because ye are strong, and have overcome the the wicked one." It may be life affected by disease, but it is life, the life of God in the soul, progressing to fullness and vigor immortal.

We notice, 2. The final salvation of such an one is sure. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, 'He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

The two assertions of the text to notice under this head are, that such an one hath everlasting life, and shall never come into condemnation. Observe, we speak of the true believer. The mere profession is not included. Of ten virgins, in the parable, five only were ready to go out and meet the bridegroom. "Many will say unto me,"

says the Savior, "in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, all ye that work iniquity." Such, doubtless, were Judas and Demas, Phygellus and Hermogenes. Of such, the apostle John writes, saying: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us." The hypocrite will not always call upon God, but the believer, the truly righteous man, shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall become stronger and stronger. This certainly does not belong to mere profession, though it may, for a while, like that of the foolish virgins, be a flaming one.

I remark again, this certainty does not depend upon man's free will. The history of free will is a sad one. The angels who fell from their first estate, no doubt, professed it, but it did not preserve them. With such a pilot, they made shipwreck, and sank hopelessly in the gulf of perdition. Man, in his estate of holiness possessed it, but it did not preserve him. With such a captain, he was totally routed, and suffered a ruinous defeat. If free will was insufficient, in a state of holiness, to preserve man and angel from falling, much less

can it be depended upon, as man is now. If angels, in their best estate, were chargeable with folly, and if man, in his best estate, is altogether vanity, then, surely, in his present condition, if free will were all that has ever been claimed for it, it would be a most miserable dependence. The certainty of the true believer's salvation does not depend upon free will, in itself considered. This, without the special grace of God to sustain and guide it, is but a broken reed.

I remark further, the certainty of the true believer's final salvation, does not depend upon his living a life, in this world, of sinless perfection. For "there is not a just man upon earth that liveth and sinneth not." David, king of Israel, fell into great sins. Peter grievously denied his Lord and Master. And many others, who have died in the triumphs of faith, and gone safe at last, met with many sad falls by the way. The certainty of the true believer's final salvation, does not depend upon his living, in this world, a life of sinless perfection. "No mere man, since the fall, is able, in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them, in thought, word and deed." In many things we offend all, and in everything come short.

But I remark, the true believer's salvation ultimately depends, at least in part, upon the completeness and permanency of his justification. He shall never come into condemnation: never,

either in this life or that which is to come. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." And still further, we are told that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, and that whom He justified, them He also glorified. Now, why is this? We answer, because the righteousness of Christ, on the ground of which true believers are justified, is a complete and an everlasting righteousness. "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us, and received by faith alone."

It is a doctrine of Scripture, that Adam and Christ are representative persons. Adam in the covenant of works; Christ in the covenant of grace. Had Adam stood in the covenant of works, then had all whom he represented had their standing in holiness secured. But he failed. "By one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Now, all he represented, as soon as they be born, naturally, are in a state of condemnation.

Now Christ, as the representative of His people, secured, by His satisfaction to the violated law, justification for them; and just as certain as condemnation comes upon those whom Adam represented, upon their natural birth, just so certain

does justification come upon those whom Christ represented, upon their spiritual birth. Moreover, just as certain as Adam's success had secured the perpetuation of those he represented in holiness, upon being naturally born, just so certain must the success of Christ secure the perpetuation in a state of justification, of those He represented, upon their being spiritually born. They shall never come into condemnation. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us." The plain import of this is, that there is no one who can put under condemnation those for whom Christ, by His death, hath made satisfaction.

And here we may see how the standing of the believer is more secure in Christ than it ever was in Adam. Adam, not having fully completed his obedience, never secured the permanency of the benefits, but Christ, having paid the last mite, secured the benefits in perpetuity. The true believer, then, shall never come into condemnation, because he is in covenant with God in Christ, the conditions of which have been fully met, and hence, the benefits irrevocably secured. The surety having fully met the bond, judgment can never be entered against the principal.

Again. They shall never come into condemnation, because they are interested in the unfailing intercession of Christ. "Him the Father heareth

always." He prays for them, not that they may be taken out of the world, but kept from the evil, and eventually be with Him in glory. He hath ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for all who believe on His name. Not by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Now, the true believer is interested in the merit and intercession of Christ, and, as these cannot fail, his interests are secure. They may be greatly tried, may fall seven times, but they shall be lifted up again. "Simon, Simon," said the Savior, "Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Christ's intercession prevailed, and Peter's faith, after his fall, took hold of forgiving mercy. David, also, after his fall, repented of his transgression and obtained pardon. The intercession of Christ did not fail in his behalf; and says the apostle Peter, "For David speaketh concerning Him, 'I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved." So of many others whose record is left for our instruction. The true believer shall never come into condemnation. God's Word says they shall never perish. "I give unto them," says Christ, "eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave

them to me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

But the certainty of the true believer's final salvation chiefly depends upon his union to Christ, the living Head, by the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit. In regeneration, the soul is broken off from the old stock of Adam, and grafted into the new stock, even Christ. This is an engrafting into life — a life, not precarious as in Adam, because of the weakness of the flesh, but forever abiding, because in the keeping of One possessed of the mighty power of God. The source of this life is unfailing, and, says the Savior: "Because I live, ye shall live also." This work of regeneration is a birth to everlasting life. And says the Savior again: "Whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die." "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life." Hence, the apostle asks: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "I am persuaded," says he again, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

But some, perhaps, will say, if the true believer will certainly be finally saved, will not this make him careless in reference to sin? I have heard

of professors who said, if they believed the doctrine of the certainty of the true believer's final salvation, they would take their fill of sin. My hearers, the true believer has long since had his fill of sin. He had it in the day of his true conviction of the error of his way, when, in terror he cried: "What must I do to be saved?" He had it in the day when, in godly penitence and faith, he looked unto Him whom he had pierced. He has it day by day, as he mourns over indwelling sin, and cries out: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" God makes them to understand the words of the prophet, where he says: "That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord thy God." The true believer has had some experience of the consuming power of sin, and, like a burnt child, he dreads nothing so much as the fire. The lamb may fall into the ditch, but it can never love to wallow in the mire. "What? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid: how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" It is true, the believer knows of an infallible remedy for the evil of sin, but he knows, too, that it brings pain and grief. Will a man, because he knows of an antidote to poison, take that poison, when he knows that it will occasion dreadful spasms and pain before he can use

the remedy? Surely not. He that would make this use of the doctrine, may rest assured that he is not a true believer. "He that is born of God, cannot sin, [that is, so sin] for His seed remaineth in him, so that he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

But it may be asked, will not a persuasion of the truth of this doctrine be a temptation to remissness in duty? The apostle Paul teaches differently. He felt that he was not running uncertainly. He was not fighting as one that beateth the air, that is, to no purpose. But, says he: "I keep my body under and bring it into subjection, lest, that by any means, when I have preached unto others, I myself should be a cast-a-way." His certainty seemed to stimulate his diligence. And this, indeed, is natural. The man who knows that his labor will not be in vain, is the most likely to be diligent. Reward sweetens labor, and the more certain the reward, the sweeter the labor.

But while the text teaches that true believers shall never come into condemnation, it does not deny that they may fall into sin, and be visited with divine chastisement. Their neglects or remissness in regard to duty, may occasion their falling, and, for a time, cause the hiding of God's face. Thus, says the Psalmist, "Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled." They may thus grieve the Holy Spirit, and be made to mourn over the want of spiritual communion. Thus

David felt, and cried: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit." They may be deprived, in a measure, of their comforts and graces. Thus Samson, when he had yielded to temptation, said: "I will go out and shake myself as at other times, for he knew not that the Lord had departed from him." He soon discoverd it in dreadful affliction. Their hearts may lose a measure of their tenderness, and thus the Word of God and the means of grace lose their interest and profit. They may thus give the enemy occasion to speak evil of the cause of religion, and, like Israel after the sin of Achan, be unable to stand before their enemies and those of their Lord. They may bring upon themselves temporal judgments, as did the profanation of the Lord's Supper, upon the Corinthians. "For this cause," said the apostle, "many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep," but when they are thus judged, they are chastened of the Lord, that they should not be condemned with the world.

But what if they die with unrepented sin upon their souls. To this, we might say, it is time enough to frame an answer when it is proved such a case has actually occurred. One thing is certain, they shall never come into condemnation. They live in a territory over which the condemnation, adjudging to death, never sweeps. It should be borne in mind, moreover, that their

justification is not based upon their repentance, but upon their union to Christ, and the partaking of His righteousness. Hence, says the apostle, "If by one man's offence, death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ."

They have, says the text, everlasting life. They are justified by a faith which is of the operation of God. It is a living faith; a habit inwrought in the soul by the divine Spirit, who has made it His temple. Now, this Spirit whom Christ gives to dwell in the heart of the believer, shall abide with him forever, and if the Spirit who produces this faith abides, so also will the faith, and thus life, be made permanent. It is plain that if the truly justified shall never come into condemnation, they must possess a faith that shall never fail, for we are justified by faith, and the just by faith shall live. "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life" — a life inwrought by the divine Spirit and secured by the purchase of Jesus Christ. He hath everlasting life. His life in this world is not perfect. The old disease of indwelling sin greatly interferes with his spiritual vigor; often occasions much pain — makes it dangerous for him to be much exposed, or to become much excited. He needs to avoid bad associations, as contagious. He must live near to the great Physician, and use diligently and daily His prescriptions. But, blessed

be God, this Physician has never lost a patient, and the medicines He prescribes are infallible. Under His treatment, this deadly disease of indwelling sin must ultimately yield. He gives everlasting life. "Whosoever," says He, "shall drink of the water that I shall give him, he shall never thirst, but the water which I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life."

The continuance of this life is of God. Hence, the apostle comforts believers by telling them that "He which had begun a good work in them, would perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." He will never leave nor forsake them, and hence, He speaks by the prophet, saying: "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

But there are passages of Scripture which some have regarded as contrary to the doctrine of the certainty of the true believer's final salvation. Now, all who admit the inspiration of the sacred Scriptures, agree that they cannot, in reality, contradict themselves. Truth is consistent. If there be seeming contradictions, there must be some way of reconciliation, or harmony, in reference to them. Either those passages which declare that the true believer shall never perish, shall never come into condemnation, hath everlasting life —

a life as certain of continuance as the life of Christ; for He says: "Because I live, ye shall live also"—either these must be so construed as to agree with those which seem to teach a different doctrine, or those which seem to teach a different doctrine must be so construed as to agree with these. Now, as a general rule, positive declarations should have the preference over those which are hypothetical; that is, based upon supposed conditions. And here, I remark, that there cannot be produced from Scripture a single case of one clearly set forth as a true believer, who totally fell away, and finally perished. We have accounts of dreadful falls and of restorations, but not one of final apostasy, in regard to which there is clear evidence of true faith. Judas was known by the Savior, and declared by Him to be a devil and a son of perdition. David and Peter fell, but not totally, nor finally. Some, of whose penitence we have but little account, are set forth in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, as having died in the faith. As Gideon and Jephthah and Samson. There is, we repeat, no well defined case in the Scriptures of a true believer falling totally and finally. There are accounts of grievous falls, without an utter failure of faith, and connected with recovery and final salvation. This is positive, and if there be doubtful cases, they must be construed so as to agree with the positive. But, perhaps, some one will ask, does not the apostle say, in his epistle

to the Galatians: "Ye are fallen from grace"? Let us read the passage: "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing; for I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law: Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: ye are fallen from grace." Plainly, this expression is based upon a supposed condition. "If ye be circumcised." Circumcision here is used to express observance of the Jewish ritual. Now, that set forth a Messiah to come. Hence, those who clung to it after Christ had come, according to its primitive design, rejected Jesus as the Christ. Their observance of the ceremonial law was, in effect, to deny that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Now, as He was truly the Messiah, and, as such, the only foundation of salvation by grace, to reject Him, was to reject the grace offered through Him. Hence, no hope remained for such, but to be saved by their obedience to the law. Such were fallen from the system of salvation by grace, and must be saved, if saved at all, by their own works. "Ye are fallen from grace." This is plainly a case based upon a supposed condition, and does not disprove the certainty of the final salvation of the true believer. It has reference to falling from the doctrine of

salvation by grace, and going back to works for justification.

Another passage is found in Heb. vi : 4–6 : "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if these shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." Here, again, we have an "if," a supposed condition.

Some suppose the things here mentioned, describe a true believer. If so, they teach that, upon the supposition that such an one should totally fall away, it must be final. He never could be brought to repentance. This would prove too much for the Arminian. He says a true believer may totally fall away and yet be again renewed, and finally saved; but upon the supposition that this is a description of the true believer, his renewal is declared impossible. Such hypothetical statements prove only the certain connection between antecedent and consequent, and are not to be viewed as positive declarations. They do not disprove "that the righteous shall hold on his way, and that he that hath clean hands shall grow stronger and stronger." They do not disprove that "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Some, however, think that this passage from the Epistle to the Hebrews, is not a description of the true believer at all. It has in it nothing, they think, that necessarily involves repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They have been "enlightened." So were the Jews, generally, in comparison with the Gentiles. So are the people who hear the Gospel, in comparison with the heathen. So was Balaam, and yet he loved the wages of unrighteousness.

It is stated, as a further characteristic, that they "have tasted of the heavenly gift." The stony ground hearers had a taste of the blessedness of the Gospel. They heard it with joy, had some pleasurable emotions in hearing its gracious truths, but they only "tasted;" they did not feed and live upon it: they were not genuine believers.

Again, the description says: "And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost." Judas was probably endowed with the power of working miracles. Balaam had something of the spirit of prophecy. But these were not true believers. They may have *tasted* the good word of God. Many have found, at least, a sort of pleasure in reading portions of the Word of God, who were never savingly converted. Scarcely a child, of common intelligence, would fail to be interested in the history of Joseph, or the parable of the prodigal son.

Again, we read further: "And the powers of the world to come." Some have had strong con-

victions: on a sick bed, it may be, or in some other circumstances, they have felt the hand of God upon them, and eternal realities seemed to flash upon their consciences, but all this may fall short of conversion.

And the text may mean even more than this. It may teach that there is a use of means which, stopping short of true conversion, leaves the heart forever sealed against any saving impressions. There is a sin in connection with means, that, being committed, puts the transgressor over the bounds of saving grace. If this be the meaning of the text, it does not disprove the position that the final salvation of the true believer is certain.

Others would make the passage to mean that the salvation of those described is not ordinarily to be expected. It is, in a measure, impossible. This view does not disprove the doctrine of the certainty of the true believer's final salvation.

There is a similar passage in Ezekiel xviii : 24; "But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done, shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die." Here, again, there is a hypothetical intimation: "when the righteous man," that is, when such a case occurs. This does not prove that such a case

would occur. When water tends upward in its flow, we might say the machinery upon our streams will be worthless.

But the righteous man here may not mean the true believer. It may simply mean, in the general sense, an upright man. The honest and honorable man, who faithfully, as to externals, discharges the duties of a good citizen. See a description, Ezekiel xviii : 5–9. The meaning may be such a man, as a citizen, is a righteous man, and shall be preserved alive and allowed to dwell in the land. This may be the meaning. Such an one might change and do wickedly, and forfeit all these promised privileges. This idea is strengthened by the proverb mentioned in the second verse: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." This was intended to apply to their temporal condition.

But whether we regard it as a description of the true believer, and regard his falling as hypothetical, or as a description of a moral man, who is promised, upon continuing thus, temporal blessings, it does not disprove the certainty of the true believer's final salvation. Judicious commentators prefer the hypothetical view.

I think we have cited the passages which seem most contrary to the doctrine, and shown that they are fairly susceptible of an interpretation in accordance with it. For my own part, I feel assured that it is a doctrine of God's Word.

The truth of this doctrine is good news to the true believer. Are we such? Have we the true oil of grace? Have we the evidence that we have passed from death unto life? This, to us, is the solemn inquiry. It is in vain to claim the true believer's privilege, without his experience and character. Profession is not sufficient. Mere conviction, however deep and pungent, is not enough. We must be born again. There must be "repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." "Except ye repent, ye shall perish." "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life. He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

IX.

Romans viii: 14-17—"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ."

THERE are among men various distinctions. They differ in external circumstances. Some are regarded as of noble birth; others as having a low origin, some as rich, others as poor, some are honored, others despised; some bond, others free. They differ in physical condition. Some are strong, others weak. Some are healthful, others never know a well day. They differ in intellectual stamina and culture. Some are superior in natural endowments, and in intellectual cultivation; others are inferior or weak-minded and uncultivated.

They differ in moral character. Some are upright in their mode of transacting business, while others are crooked in their dealings. Some are selfish, others generous. Some live for the glory of God and the good of their fellow men, others fear not God neither regard man.

And these terms of distinction are in Scripture largely applied to spiritual differences. Thus men are spoken of as differing in birth. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." There is a natural birth of which all are subjects, and there is a spiritual birth which characterizes the truly pious only. Some are spoken of as rich in faith, others as regarding themselves rich, and yet in reality are poor and miserable, blind and naked. Some as the servants of sin, and others as the freemen of the Lord. Some as without strength, and others as strong in the Lord. Some as wise unto salvation, others as without understanding and led captive by Satan at his will.

Our heavenly Father thus condescends to our weakness, and uses the things of this transitory life, to teach us of things spiritual and eternal. He thus sets up finger-boards all along our pathway, pointing out the road to heaven.

The Apostle Paul, in the preceding part of the chapter from which our text is taken, sets forth the distinction between the effectually called and justified, and those who remain deaf to the calls of mercy and under condemnation. The one are described as walking after the flesh, that is, in the way of sin, the other after the Spirit, that is, in the way of righteousness. And this walking after the flesh, and after the Spirit is indicative of different states of mind, and argues in relation to those who

walk after the Spirit, the work of a divine Agent "They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh, and they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit." The idea is advanced that if any are spiritually minded, it is because the Spirit of God dwelleth in them, and if He dwelleth in them, it is in connection with His having quickened them; but if they have been quickened by the Spirit of God, then they are, in fact, the sons of God. If God has begotten them to spiritual life, they are His children. Here then is the great distinction. To be a child of God, is indeed, evidence of a noble birth, evidence of being blessed with noble influences, of the possession of high and holy feelings, and of heirship to a glorious inheritance. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God."

Our subject is Adoption, and we ask attention while we consider its nature, evidences, and privileges.

I. And first its nature. The Scriptures speak of adoption in a sense that may be termed general, and in a sense we designate as special. General adoption has reference mainly to external privileges. Thus to the Israelites as a nation, pertained the adoption. Unto them were given the oracles and ordinances of God. With them was a covenant securing many privileges, and so is it in the visible Church still. There are covenanted mercies pertaining to the visible household of God: to

the parents and the children. But they are not all Israel who are of Israel. Many have a place in God's family here who shall be shut out hereafter. "Many shall come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, while the children of the kingdom shall be shut out."

But there is a special adoption which may be illustrated by what has often taken place among men. Sometimes the child of a stranger, or at least, of another family, is taken to dwell in a different household as a child and heir. Among the Romans there were special legal formalities to secure permanency and to give official power to this transaction. After this the adopted child, being received into the family, was invested with all the rights and privileges of a child and heir. And in the special adoption in God's family it is termed an act of God's free grace whereby we are received into the number and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God. It is a sovereign and free translation of a sinner of mankind, from the family of Satan, into the family or household of God, with an investiture of all the privileges of the sons of God.

There are some things in which civil and spiritual adoption are alike, and some in which they are unlike. They are alike in that it is in each case an act of favor. A stranger is received into the family in each case. In each case also the

name of the family and a right to inherit are conferred. They are alike in being the acts of two parties; on the one part, a proposal to adopt, and on the other, a consent to be adopted.

But in many respects they differ. In civil adoption it was often resorted unto by those who had no children of their own; but in spiritual adoption this reason is not found. God had, from eternity, a well beloved Son in whom He was always well pleased, and in whose communion there was ineffable delight, and who was heir of all things. There was moreover with Him an innumerable company of angels, ever delighting to do His will. There was then no necessity with God to look to our sinful race for additional members in His family, to fill up a void in His resources of enjoyment, or to perpetuate the glory of His name.

In civil adoption there was often something attractive in the child, or some inducement by reason of natural connection. Thus the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, adopted Moses the child of a race held in degrading bondage, because he was exceedingly fair; and Mordecai the Jew adopted Esther because she was fair and beautiful, and the daughter of his uncle. In the divine or spiritual adoption, there is nothing lovely or attractive in the subjects of it to incite affectionate regard. They are as children cast out in their blood, loathsome and vile, when God in compas-

sion and mercy bids them live, takes them to His own blessed embrace, purifies them from their uncleanness, and arrays them in garments white and clean.

In civil adoption, while the name is changed, the disposition remains the same. And no doubt this was often a matter of great discomfort to the family adopting; but in this adoption, God writes upon them a new name: He also puts a right spirit within them; He confers with the family name also the family disposition.

In civil adoption, it was generally limited to one; but in spiritual adoption, there is the bringing many sons unto glory.

As to the time of adoption, it is manifestly simultaneous with regeneration. He that is born of the Spirit is a child of God. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." It is also intimately connected with justification. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God." And again it is said, "We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." And still further, we are told, that "to as many as received Him, to wit, Christ, that is to say believe on Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God."

The work of the Holy Spirit in bringing the soul to the condition of an adopted child, we may call a series of acts or the simple progress of a gracious work. God sends His Spirit into the

heart of a careless sinner, to convict of sin and lead to godly penitence: into the heart of a penitent, to work faith in Christ for justification: and into the heart of a believer, as the Spirit of adoption enabling him to realize himself a child of God.

Faith in Christ for justification looks to His satisfaction of the law and has reference specially to our legal relations. Faith in Christ for adoption, if we may so say, looks to Him in his filial relations with God the Father. We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. God is well pleased in Christ as His beloved Son, and receives those united to Him, as His children. Hence, Christ in ascending could say, "I go to my Father, and your Father; to my God and your God." Thus there is provided in Christ a reconstruction both of legal and filial relation. Adam our first parent was not only righteous before God, but in a special sense, the son of God. He was so by immediate creation; but emphatically so as bearing His image.

The act of adoption is of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The attributes of the Persons of the Godhead are essentially the same; the same in substance, equal in power and glory; but in personal operations in relation to man, there is place found for distinction. Knowledge, at least, in some of its phases is specially designated as pertaining to God. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." Righteousness,

at least, in some of its phases is ascribed to Christ. "This is the name by which He shall be called, 'The Lord our righteousness.'" He is also called Jesus Christ the righteous. The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of holiness. Now knowledge, righteousness and holiness mainly constituted the image in which man was created. May we not then say that this triune image was suggestive of the Triune Jehovah, and that its restoration therefore is made the work of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? However this may be, yet we know that the heirs of grace and glory are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Hence says the Apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him, in love. Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will. To the praise of the glory of His grace wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved." Of Jesus Christ it is said, that "to as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God." And of the Spirit, that He is sent into their hearts to give them the Spirit of adoption, 'whereby they

cry, Abba Father.' "Adopted into the number and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God." God in Christ has purposed to bring many sons unto glory. They are naturally in the number of strangers and foreigners. He adopts them into the number of the saints and into the household of God. They belonged by nature and practice to the number of the guilty and condemned, now they are of the number who know Christ as the Lord their righteousness. Such is the nature of spiritual adoption. It is a translation from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. It is an act of God, and that most gracious, there being nothing naturally attractive or lovely in the subject of it. It is connected with faith, and involves the change of legal relation; but regards specially filial connection and is intimately connected in time with regeneration. It is an act of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and is an enduring relation.

II. We notice in the second place the evidences of adoption. This to us is a very important part of the subject. Am I a child of God, and of the number of His sons and daughters? It is no certain evidence of being a child of God that we have been born of pious parents. This indeed is a great privilege, but not in itself saving. They to whom is given power to become sons of God, are said, "to be born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

It is no certain evidence of this special adoption that we have been baptized. This indeed is a token of covenant relation. It indicates a right to special privileges in the Church, and that is a precious thing; but they are not all Israel who are of Israel.

Nor is it certain evidence that we are the subjects of this special adoption, that we have a place in the Church by profession of our faith. "Many will say unto me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works;' and then will I profess unto them I never knew you."

Nor is it any certain evidence of adoption that we have been the subject of very pungent convictions, have passed anxious days, and sleepless nights, feeling that we were standing upon the very verge of Hell. Deep and pungent convictions, distressing fears and torturing anxieties may be but a work of law and conscience, and stop short of a work of grace.

It was a notion assigned to the Hopkinsian system that true grace made a man willing to be condemned. This we regard as altogether extravagant, and unnatural even to a renewed heart. It is no doubt true that a heart taught by the Holy Spirit, feels that God might justly consign it to endless wrath, and that, even if thus dealt with, it would still be obliged to adore His awful justice;

yet this does not prove a willingness to suffer the pains of hell forever.

They that are the children of God, are led by the Spirit of God. Observe *led*, not driven; natural conscience, under the influence of religious instruction, may drive men to the performance of many external duties, especially when the dread of judgment lies hard upon the soul; but services thus rendered may be connected with the feeling of the slothful servant." "I knew thee," said he of his master, "that thou art a hard master."

The evidence of adoption is that they are led by the Spirit. They are led to the Word of God. The Word of God is "a lamp unto our feet and a light to our path." "Search the Scriptures," said the Savior, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." "I thought on my ways," said the Psalmist, "and turned my feet to Thy testimonies; I made haste and delayed not to keep Thy commandments." The soul led by the Spirit of God cries, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do." "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth. I will hear what God the Lord will speak." Seest thou a soul awakened that runs to God's Word and makes it his earnest and prayerful study? There is hope concerning that soul. The Spirit of God leads to the Word of God.

But further, the Spirit of God leads to the work of God. It leads to obey. Does God's

Word say, "ask and ye shall receive," the soul is led to prayer, and then it is said of the sinner, behold he prayeth. It leads to penitence. "Surely, after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh, I was ashamed, yea even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth."

The Spirit of God leads to faith in Christ. "This is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." "Lord to whom shall we go but to Thee: Thou only hast the words of eternal life."

It leads to the people of God. It leads them to say "this people shall be my people, and their God shall be my God." The Spirit of God leads to the house of God and its ordinances. Led by the Spirit of God, the soul cries out, "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts. My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Yea, it leads the soul to say, "I esteem all Thy commandments concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way."

There is freedom from the spirit of bondage. It is not the spirit of a slave; that serves only from fear: but the spirit of a son, that obeys from love. "The Spirit of adoption," says the text, "where-

by we cry Abba, Father," that is, call God our Father with the earnest confiding feeling of a child.

The learned Mr. Selden has proved from the Babylonian gamara that a slave or menial servant was not permitted to employ this appellation in addressing the Ab. that is the Lord, and head of the family, because it was indicative of the closest relationship and the tenderest reciprocal affection.

Another evidence is that of the Spirit. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Some have thought that were a child and parent separated until they would not know each other at sight, yet being brought together and conversing with each other, there would arise a sort of instinctive feeling of a kindred relation. Facts do not sustain this theory in regard to natural relationship. It is true however, between God and His children. When the child of God speaks to His heavenly Father, and when his heavenly Father speaks to him, there is a feeling of relation. "Whom not having seen ye love, in whom though now ye see Him not yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." So also in relation to the children of God. Though strangers they are drawn together in meeting and conversing with one another of spiritual things. "We know," says the Apostle, "that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."

"The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit." Some say that this is by a direct supernatural impression upon our hearts that our sins are forgiven, and that the witness of our Spirit is the consciousness of the exercises of the children of God as described in His Word. Others say that the witness of the Spirit in adoption is through the Word made specially effective by a divine agency. God's Spirit enables me to see in His truth a fullness of meaning that convicts and moves me to penitence and faith. My spirit is conscious that it responds to that truth, as thus seen. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Thus we call God our Father with a peculiar confidence and affection, and thus our spirits are drawn out in prayer with a peculiar earnestness. "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groaning that cannot be uttered." The Spirit enables us to perceive a peculiar fullness and adaptation in the Scriptures to our need. The witness of the Spirit seems, here in the text, to mean specially a feeling wrought in our souls enabling us to call God our Father with childlike confidence and love. This we regard as its special import in the passage before us, while we do not reject the special and peculiar emotions with which the child of God is sometimes favored in prayer, and praise, in reading and hearing the Word of God, and in the ordinances of the sanctuary.

"By the witness of the Spirit," says the gifted Edwards, "we understand the work of the Spirit upon the soul evidencing itself by its results. It is the seal of the Spirit stamping upon the heart its own image. Its effect is that the heart is filled with holy love which casts out slavish fear. It is the earnest and pledge of heaven consisting in the temper and disposition of heaven begun. It is that gracious holy effect of the Spirit of God in the hearts of the saints, the disposition and temper of children, appearing in sweet childlike love to God."

By our spirits he understands the conscience. The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord searching all the inward parts of the belly. And says the Apostle Paul, "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you ward." See also 1 Jno. iii: 19-21. "And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."

One thing we would remark and that is the "word "beareth witness" seems to indicate something abiding—a constant work.

We may briefly mention as further evidences of adoption: Renunciation of former dependen-

ces. "Ephraim shall say what have I more to do with idols?" Affection: Thou art my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in thee. "Lord Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." Patient submission under trials. "Thy will be done." "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good." "Good is the Word of the Lord. Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because Thou didst it. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. What shall I say: the Lord hath spoken and Himself hath done it, I shall go softly all the days of my life in the bitterness of my soul." I will go softly, not murmuringly or proudly. Such are the expressions of patient submission uttered by the lips of God's adopted children.

III. But we notice thirdly the privileges of the adopted. They have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God. They have put upon them great honor. They are the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. Is it an honor to be the child of a great and good earthly King? As high as the heaven above the earth, so far does the honor of being a child of God exceed that of relation to any earthly potentate. They are kings and priests unto God, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people.

No service so honorable as theirs. Servants of God. They have a gracious provision. All God's

promises are to them yea and amen in Christ Jesus. All things are made to work together for their good. All things are theirs—whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or life or death, or things present or things to come, all are theirs. He that spared not His own Son but freely gave Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things. And if children, then heirs —heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Heirs of His sufferings and triumphs—heirs of the righteousness which is by faith; heirs of the grace of life; heirs of salvation; heirs of glory; heirs to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away. "Father," said the blessed Savior, "I will that those which Thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold My glory." "Behold," says the apostle John, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is."

They have divine protection. The Lord is their keeper. The sun shall not smite them by day nor the moon by night.

> "He bids His angels pitch their tents,
> Round where His children dwell;
> What ills their heavenly care prevents,
> No earthly tongue can tell."

Of the angels it is said, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation?" In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence and His children have a place of refuge.

They have freedom of access to a throne of grace. They are invited to "Come boldly, that they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask any thing according to His will He heareth us."

"They find access at every hour
To God within the veil;
Thence they derive a quickening power,
And joys that never fail."

They can come to God in affliction and cast their burden upon Him. They are assured that "He careth for them." While they feel the rod, they look to Him that hath appointed it. And in sweet resignation exclaim, "Now Lord, what wait I for, my hope is in Thee."

"'Tis dark, my Father! very dark,
My way I cannot see;
Save where a rift between the clouds,
Gives out a light from Thee.
I tremble, Father! for the storm
Hath filled my soul with fear;
Save in the pauses of its peals,
Thy loving voice I hear.
I'm sinking, Father! for the waves
Swell high at Thy command;
Save when my rising faith can feel
The pressure of Thy hand.

I stagger, Father! 'neath the cross
Upon my shoulders laid;
Save when I feel the Comforter
For whom I long have prayed.
I'm doubtful, Father! for before
A wilderness doth spread;
And mockingly distrust will ask,
Who then can furnish bread?
Save when in tones of tenderness,
My unbelief you chide,
By telling me if I but trust,
You'll promise to provide.
I'm fainting, Father! 'neath the blow
From Thine uplifted rod;
Save when I feel sustaining me
The mighty arms of God.
Keep near me, Father! lead me still
In paths I may not know;
Choose all my changes; but I pray—
Be with me where I go.
Meet out the shadow or the light,
As best may prove for me;
Thy smile, or rod which e'er may bind
With strongest cord to Thee."

These lines from an unknown pen seem to me to breathe the spirit of a child of God.

Even chastisements are a privilege. They indicate a Father's love. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth," and that for their profit that they may be partakers of His holiness. He purgeth the branch that it may bring forth more fruit. He counteracts its earthly tendencies by cutting off the limbs that weigh it to the ground. The objects of our earthly affections are torn from us, that we may give our hearts more entirely to

Him. "I see God will have all my heart," said a pious mother, when news was brought that her two children were drowned. The trees of righteousness need pruning, and God knows how and when to apply the knife. "I am the true vine," says Christ, "and my Father is the husbandman; every branch in me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit."

The child of God is privileged to be under His discipline. Sometimes He withdraws the manifestation of His favor, and the soul walks in darkness. Zion saith, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me." God says, "in a little wrath, I hid my face; but with everlasting mercies, I will gather Thee." Sometimes He visits their transgressions with a rod and their backslidings with stripes; but His living kindness He will not take away from them, nor suffer His faithfulness to fail. It is a privilege to be under the discipline of such a teacher. "Though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His tender mercies."

How dignified is the portion of God's adopted children. They have God for their Father, Jesus Christ for their Elder Brother, the Holy Spirit for their Comforter, angels for their servants, and heaven for their home. How happy is their state? They have peace with God:

> "What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy
> The soul's calm sunshine and the heartfelt joy."

The love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by His Spirit which is given them. The promises of God are for their consolation and support. The Providence of God is engaged for their welfare. All things work together for good to them that love God.

"How happy every child of grace,
Who feels his sins forgiven;
This earth, he cries, is not my place,
I have a home in heaven.

A country far from mortal sight,
Yet oh, by faith I see
The land of rest, the saints' delight,
The heaven prepared for me."

How great the adopted child's responsibility, "Seeing we look for such things, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness." Let us walk worthy of our high calling. Much has been given, much is required.

How glorious is his prospect. "I reckon," says the Apostle Paul, "that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Elsewhere he speaks of it as "an exceeding and eternal weight of glory"—"an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away"—the glory which Christ had with the Father before the world was.

Is not such a portion worthy of earnest consideration? Is there any hope that a poor wilful wanderer from God can ever be permitted to share such a privilege? Will the Prodigal who has

wasted his substance, and whose sense of want and misery constrains him to look to his Father's house with a bare peradventure of relief, be permitted to have even the humblest place there? O yes, there are bowels of mercies, and a Father's heart to welcome, and a Father's hand to bestow upon him the best robe and the richest provision.

"Let the wicked forsake his way and the ununrighteous man his thoughts, and let him turn unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. Wherefore, come out from among them and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

All things are yours. The earth was given to man at his creation, the ground to yield him food, the living creatures to be his servants. This grant was forfeited by sin. Man broke his allegiance to God, and yielded himself to the service of Satan. The earth and all the creatures that live upon it, thus became subject to vanity, to the dominion of evil and confusion. Satan usurped dominion and became the god of this world. Jesus Christ has redeemed this world, and is its rightful owner and ruler. He has set up a government over it which is eventually to put down all opposition. All things are in labor for the production of this grand consummation. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth,

waiting the time of complete restitution, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

For wise purposes, Satan is permitted to continue for a time his ever-warring usurpations, and all who continue in his service have a place in this world by sufferance.

But when a soul is born into the kingdom of God, it occupies a new relation to earthly things. He lives here as pertaining to the royal family, to whose head all things belong. The Church of God embracing all its spiritual members is the wife of the Great King. She has a right to the earth, by virtue of that relation. The things which God gives His children to use and enjoy, are theirs by a special right. They hold them not by sufferance as aliens; but in virtue of filial relation. They are identified with the lawful owner. Hence all things are theirs. Theirs is this world and the creatures that dwell upon it. All things are yours. Theirs is the government, the supreme government, which is exercising its authority and power, though unseen, in subduing all things to itself.

Theirs is the Providence, that wheel within a wheel, full of eyes, high and dreadful, working all things for the good of those who love God.

All the agencies and instruments in this work are theirs. All the vast results that are hastening to their development under the guidance of infinite wisdom and goodness, and the exercise of infinite

power, are theirs. All are yours, ye adopted children of God. Ye are Christ's, Christ's purchase. His purchase by substitution, by price paid. His redeemed by power. Ye are Christ's heritage, His family, members of His body, the Church, and Christ is God's, God's Anointed, to whom is given all power in heaven and in earth, and who is Head over all things to the Church. "Behold," says the Apostle John, "What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

Even so may we all at last appear, to the praise and glory of His mercy and grace.

"The way is dark, my Father! cloud on cloud
Is gathering thickly o'er my head, and loud
The thunders roar above me. See, I stand
Like one bewildered! Father, take my hand,
And through the gloom
Lead safely home
Thy child!

"The day goes fast, my Father! and the nigh
Is drawing darkly down. My faithless sight
Sees ghostly visions. Fears, a spectral band,
Encompass me. O Father, take my hand,
And from the night,
Lead up to light
Thy child!

"The way is long, my Father! and my soul
Longs for the rest and quiet of the goal;
While yet I journey through this weary land,
Keep me from wandering. Father, take my hand,
Quickly and straight,
Lead to heaven's gate
Thy child!

"The path is rough, my Father! many a thorn
Has pierced me; and my weary feet, all torn
And bleeding, mark the way. Yet Thy command
Bids me press forward. Father, take my hand;
Then, safe and blest,
Lead up to rest
Thy child!

"The throng is great, my Father! many a doubt
And fear, and danger compass me about;
And foes oppress me sore. I can not stand,
Or go alone. O Father, take my hand,
And through the throng,
Lead safe along
Thy child!

"The cross is heavy, Father! I have borne
It long, and still do bear it. Let my worn
And fainting spirit rise to that blest land
Where crowns are given. Father, take my hand;
And, reaching down,
Lead to the crown
Thy child!"

X.

Gen. iii: 9—"And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?"

THESE are the first words which the Creator addressed to the creature man, after his fall. Previously, he had always been in the right place: but now he had transgressed the bounds which infinite wisdom had set for him. He had sinfully wandered from his place. He had broken the hedge, and found the thorns. He needed to be brought to consider his ways, to contemplate the relation in which he now stood to God, and posterity, to pause and ask himself what have I done, where am I, and whither am I going? He was constrained to confess that he was trying to hide from the God that made him. He said he was ashamed, because he was naked. He had stripped himself of his garment of innocence, and found that he had lost it forever. He had not then learned of the robe of a Savior's righteousness, attainable through the mercy of God, with which being clothed, he might stand before Him justified and accepted. But blessed be God, he was not left long in hopeless anxiety. A revelation of a deliverer was soon made and we doubt not that

his soul laid hold of it and rejoiced in the provisions of a better covenant.

It is not, however, our intention at present, to pursue the history of Adam. He has long since gone to his reward. His life was pre-eminently an eventful one; but he has finished his pilgrimage, and we doubt not is safe at home: a sinner saved by grace. He has a place in glory, to praise with loud note the wonders of redeeming love. We, his children, here to-day, are still out upon the sea of life, and have not yet reached the haven of eternal rest. We are still upon our journey, and happy will it be for us, if at last we are found among those who, through faith and patience, have inherited the promises.

It seems specially suitable that to-day we should each, for ourselves, ponder the question, where art thou. We are near one of those points which mark the progress of time. The great clock of years will soon peal its solemn knell of another such season gone: gone with its account of improvement, or misimprovement, to Him who gave it.

"'Tis greatly wise to call back past hours; and ask them what account they have borne to heaven."

It is surely highly proper that a man should ask himself from time to time, where am I in relation to God and eternity, as well as in relation to time and his fellow-men. The year now closing has been to us terribly eventful. We have, as a people, encountered a dreadful storm — a Euroclydon,

and there is no Apostle Paul to tell us there shall be no loss of life, but only of the lading of the ship. Many lives have been already lost — much that is precious and valuable destroyed. And still the tempest rages with unabated fury. It becomes us to cry mightily unto God, whose Word is mightier than the noise of many waters, if so be, that He will think upon us, that we perish not. What meanest thou? O, sleeper, arise and call upon thy God. Whether we shall live to see a calm, and if we do, upon what strange shore we shall be cast, and how destitute we shall be, is known only to God. He is at the helm, and amid all the darkness of the night, the fierce howling of the winds, and the awful roar of the surging billows. He is steering in the right channel, heading for the right port, and making all things work together for good to them that love Him. Where we are as a people politically, it is not our intention now to inquire. Sufficient it is for us to know that we are in the hands of a wise, just and holy God, and that He is dealing with us according to His own great and glorious plan. It is surely right to pray that the year now opening, may be filled with better hopes than the past has been.

Nor do we intend, as our main design, to press the question in reference to the time of our lives, individually considered. "Our days upon earth are as a shadow and there is none abiding." "What is your life—it is even a vapor which appeareth

for a little time and then vanishes away." Some of us at least might do well to mark our lengthening shadows as indicating that our sun of life is declining—our day upon earth drawing to its close. Some of us can see, or at least, our friends can tell us, that the wrinkles on our brow are increasing, the furrows upon our cheeks deepening, our locks growing lighter and thinner, our carriage becoming less erect, and our step less elastic : the marks of decay are certainly increasing. It becomes us

> "To walk thoughtful on the silent solemn shore
> Of that vast ocean we must sail so soon"—

Others, less conscious of the presence of these signs of advancing years, yet notice the number and growth of their households, and say, "well, how time passes—the child has become a man or woman."

The young, too, can see that they are growing in stature, and would that we could say, in favor both with God and man. Time is passing, the stream is bearing us onward. "Where art thou?" Oh that God would so teach us to number our days that we might apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Nor is it our main design to press the question in relation to our temporal things. Although we think it is the part of wisdom for men, at least once a year, to see how their accounts stand with their fellow-men, and settle as best they may with those to whom they are indebted. It is an old

adage that "short settlements make long friends," and it is as true with congregations and ministers, as with individuals. It is well in this as in other matters, to know where we are. But as regards worldly matters, "the time," says the Apostle "is short. It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away." We are working out the drama of life—scene after scene is passing, and we hasten to the last.

But we purpose to direct attention, as our main design, to our moral and spiritual condition. "Where art thou?" This we regard as the main point in the question as addressed unto Adam. The voice of God still sounds along the track of our years. Oh ye sons and daughters of an apostate parent, where are ye now? And, yet again, in searching tones of love and mercy, it comes from the cross, saying, Oh ye for whom is opened the door of salvation at such a cost, where are ye now? And still to those also who have fled to lay hold of the hope set before them in the Gospel. Where are ye? What is your progress in the divine life? Are your evidences clear, your hopes bright, your love warm, your faith strong, your zeal lively, your fruit abundant—"where art thou?"

Alas, many are trying to hide from God. Some among the trees of worldly pleasure, some in the haunts of vice and dissipation, some in the pursuit of gain or honor. Poor, sin-besotted mortals! like the silly bird that hides its head, and seems to think, because it can no longer see its pursuer, therefore it is safe — so the deluded sons of men close their eyes, stop their ears, and seem to feel secure from the search of God and His truth.

Others dress themselves up in the fig-tree leaves of their own morality, and vainly think they may say to God, "here am I" without fear; but they must stand abashed and speechless, when God shall say, "how camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment?" Where art *thou?*

Of many, alas, there is no doubt but they are in the broad road that leads down to eternal death. You have travelled on another year towards the portals of a burning hell. Some of you have long trodden this dreadful path: neither yourself nor friends have any reason to doubt as to where you are. It is dreadful to the parents' heart to feel that the child of their own bodies is on his way to a death of infamy—that he will die upon the gallows, guilty of deeds that shall make him an execration, and a curse to all virtuous people: but oh how much more awful to think of children and beloved friends on their way to the dark world of eternal anguish, to die the death that knows no ending, guilty of a course in life that makes

them an execration and a curse to a thrice Holy God.

And there has been a hardening of heart, and a fixing of habits year after year, that goes on; increasing the probabilities that you will at last die in your sins, and where God and Christ is, in the world of glory, you never can come. And if not, there remains only the dark pit of unending woe. There, with devils and lost spirits must your everlasting portion be. Then the opportunities here afforded, Sabbaths, sermons, sacraments, all the means of grace, and all the calls of providence, will only be as so many mill-stones to sink your sinful soul deeper and deeper down in the gulf of perdition.

> "Behold, the aged sinner goes—
> Laden with guilt and heavy woes;
> Down to the regions of the dead,
> With endless curses on his head."

Others have not trodden the paths of wickedness so long, but their progress in sin has been very rapid. Your susceptibility to religious impressions is fast dying out. You take great interest in worldly amusements; but you have no heart for prayer, and the spirit-purifying excellences of God's children. The company of the godly and their spiritual exercises have no charms for you. You stand in the way of sinners—walk in the counsel of the ungodly, and, perhaps, already occupy the seat of the scornful. You can have no difficulty in answering the question, where art *thou?* You

are drifting with the tide of worldly influences and sinful pleasures, on to the sea of everlasting despair.

But there are others, perhaps, who feel they can answer the question more favorably. They entertain, it may be, no doubt of their good estate. They say, peace, peace to their souls, and whatever may be the cry of the sentinel, they still respond, "all is well, all is well."

> "Come then a still small whisper in your ear,
> He never had a hope who never had a fear;
> And he who never doubted of his case,
> He may perhaps—perhaps he may, too late."

"Happy is he that feareth always. Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." There is the hypocrite's hope, who, with vain confidence, may come up even to the judgment with his, "Lord, Lord," and there meet with everlasting banishment from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.

But there are those whose position is not so clear, either to themselves or others. They have a hope; but it is not like a spring, constantly yielding refreshing waters. They sometimes seem to wander in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, and their mournful cry is, "woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, and dwell in the tents of Kedar." Oh to see thy power and glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary.

There is a hope, sure and steadfast, entering into that which is within the vail, and it is possible for

the true Christian, yea, even his privilege, to attain unto it. There is an assurance of hope—a hope that maketh not ashamed—a hope that triumphs over death itself, and fails not,

> "'Till faith is sweetly lost in sight,
> And hope in full supreme delight,
> And everlasting love."

It is a good hope through grace. How may a man know what the character of his hope is? The Scriptures furnish instruction, by which he may prove himself, and with the blessing of God, know whether he is in the faith or not. And if a man is commended, who is careful to see that his title to his earthly possessions is undoubted, much more should he be regarded as wise, who rests not satisfied without clear evidence of his title to the heavenly inheritance.

> "Lord, let not all my hopes be vain,
> Create my heart entirely new,
> Which hypocrites could ne'er attain;
> Which false apostles never knew."

And here, we would remark, a flaming profession, and great attention to the externals of religion, does not prove a man a real Christian. None made a louder profession, or were more exact in their observance of the externals of religion than the Pharisees, and yet the Savior says, "except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

And here, great responsibility rests upon the ministers of the Gospel. They are to be careful not to heal the hurt of the people slightly, saying, "peace, peace, when there is no peace." They are to take heed not to make the gate to heaven wider than God has made it in His own blessed Word. If they repudiate the doctrine of total depravity, and the necessity of a radical change of heart, they may induce men to join the Church, and to go about to establish their own righteousness; but it will be upon a platform but little removed from mere heathen philosophy. When a spurious gospel is preached, men often rush in crowds to connect themselves with the people claiming to be the Church of God; but when the Gospel is faithfully preached, men feel that something more than a strict morality, and a general profession of faith in some leading Bible doctrine, is necessary to constitute a true Christian, and because they feel that they are not created in Christ Jesus unto good works, they are kept back from making a public profession of religion. The Lord in mercy preserve His ministers from daubing up His Church with untempered mortar, and by His own Spirit and grace cause that His house be built up with goodly stones.

We say that there is a hope that maketh not ashamed, and that the true child of God may attain to a good degree of assurance that it is his. This assurance is not based upon transitory emo-

tions, or dreams of the night. There may be sudden transitions from deep sadness to lively joy, and yet the root of true grace be wanting. Some, we fear, lay too much stress upon their feelings. They tell us sometimes that the evidence of their change was to them as sudden and palpable, as if they had been groaning and struggling under a heavy burden, and all at once thrown it down. They could no more doubt the removal of their spiritual burden, than they could that of a physical weight. Now, we do not deny the possibility of this; we only say that it is not in accordance with the more general Scriptural illustrations in reference to this subject. Man, in religion, is dealt with as a rational being, and not as a mere beast of burden. "Examine yourselves, therefore—prove your own selves whether ye be in the faith or not." Look to the Scriptural evidences, the way-marks as set down in the word of Truth.

Moreover, I think it will be found in general, that those who lay so much stress upon their feelings, in regard to assurance, hold also that a man may throw down his religion just as he throws down a burden. Their religion, or their notions of religion is, that it can be taken up and laid down, put on and put off as a man his raiment—a saint to-day—an unconverted sinner to-morrow, and again the third day, or at a longer interval, a saint again. Not so, is the Bible teaching. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and shall

never come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

The assurance of which we speak is a matter of rational evidence, a state of faith, and attested in God's appointed way, by His Holy Spirit. We say it is a matter admitting of rational evidence, having its principles and corresponding facts. The Word of God lays down the principles, and gives examples in illustration. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." This announces the principle. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity," says the penitent David, "and in sin did my mother conceive me." "I know that in me"—said the Apostle Paul, struggling with indwelling sin, "that is in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing." Here is the confession in the experience of godly men illustrating the principle. Again, "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. For there is not a just man upon earth, that liveth and sinneth not. In many things, we offend all, and in everything we come short." This marks the principle.

The illustration in the facts of experience, is on this wise, "if Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand?" The law is holy, and the commandment holy; but I am carnal, sold under sin. "God, be merciful to me a sinner."

Again, the principle runs thus, "for there is none other name under heaven given among men where-

by we must be saved. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." The illustrative experience is after this manner—"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus—who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, to whom shall we go but unto Thee, Thou only hast the words of eternal life." Again, the principle is thus stated—"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The corresponding illustration is to this effect—"Then hath God also unto the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of. "Out of the depths, have have I cried unto Thee, O Lord."

Again, the principle declares—"A good tree bringeth forth good fruit." The responding illustration is—"Ye are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." Again, the principle is, "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The facts in Christian experience assure us, that the Spirit leads a man to see his own vileness. "Behold," says Job, "I am vile: what shall I answer? I will lay my hand upon my mouth." It leads unto God, as unto a father from whom we have sinfully wandered. It says with the prodigal son, "I will arise, and go to

my Father, and will say unto Him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before Thee." It leads to God in Christ, recognizing the truth "that no man cometh unto the Father, but by Christ." It leads him to God in Christ, just as he is, without one plea except the merits of Christ. It leads to the Word of God. "Remember Thy Word unto Thy servant upon which Thou hast caused me to hope. I esteem all Thy commandments concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way."

It leads to the people of God. It says with Ruth, "where thou goest, I will go; where thou diest, there will I be buried; thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God." It leads to the exercises of the people of God—to prayer—"Behold, he prayeth"—to praise, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." It leads to the house of God, and we hear him say, "a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." It leads to the ordinances, and to all the labors and sacrifices of God's people. Leads him to say, "I am not my own, but bought with a price, and bound to glorify God in my body and spirit, which are God's."

Now these principles, and these facts, according with them, in Christian experience, I call rational evidence of the truth of these principles, and an experience according to these examples. "Faith

is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Faith, which is of the operation of God's Spirit, is spiritual life begun. Faith, or spiritual consciousness of the character of the law as holy, just and good, fastens conviction upon the soul of its own vileness, just condemnation and absolute helplessness. Faith, or spiritual consciousness of the adaptation of Jesus Christ and His righteousness to my wants, as a guilty, helpless sinner, and of the mercy of God, in offering Him thus to me, brings me to the foot of the Cross, to lay my burden there, leads me to crave and rest upon His righteousness as all my salvation, and all my desire. Faith, or spiritual consciousness that my sins were laid on Jesus, and helped to nail Him to the Cross, brings me to look unto Him, as one whom I have pierced, and to weep for my great wickedness, as "one mourneth for an only son, and to be in bitterness, as one is in bitterness for a firstborn." Faith, or spiritual consciousness of the fullness of the blessings of Gospel invitations, offers and promises, leads me to love the Gospel, and the book which contains it.

Faith, or spiritual consciousness of the excellence of God's service, and the benefit of association with His people, leads me to cast my lot with them, and to make their portion mine.

Faith, or spiritual consciousness of the accessibility of the mercy seat, where I may come with all my wants and burden, leads me to draw nigh,

that I may obtain mercy and find grace to help me in time of need. Faith, or spiritual consciousness of the benefits received through Christ, leads me to cry out, "Oh bless the Lord, my soul, and forget not all His benefits." Faith, or spiritual consciousness of my great obligations to God, for His love to me, a poor sinner, leads me to say—

"All that I have, and all I am—
Shall be forever Thine."

Now, in these things, are the evidences of a true Christian, stronger or weaker in proportion to the strength of faith.

"Where art thou?" To what extent have you this spiritual consciousness?

In addition to this, there is the witness of the Spirit. This is found sometimes in giving intensity to our desires in prayer. "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, even with groanings that cannot be uttered," sometimes, in bringing some promise of the Gospel home upon the heart with unwonted sweetness and power. "In whom, also," that is Christ, "after that ye believed ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." I think it largely pertains to the experience of Christians, that, in some period of their exercises, they have had such a sealing of a Gospel promise. It may have been often.

First, in the day of their extremity, in view of their great sinfulness; and afterward in time of peculiar need or trial. Christians have sometimes

told me that, on certain occasions, particular texts gave them special comfort. They seemed to be sealed or impressed upon the heart with peculiar sweetness and power.

Sometimes it has been by such a sense of the goodness and mercy of God to them, as to make them feel as if heaven were already begun. The Apostle calls it "the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory." Sometimes it is in enabling the soul to realize peculiarly the spirit of adoption. To feel that it sustains the relation to God of a child, and He the relation of a father, according to the promise, "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty;" and because ye are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God."

Such, we think, is the line of evidence by which the true Christian may arrive at a comfortable conclusion that he is a child of God. 1. Looking at the principles and facts of Scripture, setting forth the way of acceptance with God, and the exercises of a heart rightly affected towards Him. Are these my principles? Have I the corresponding experience? Have I an affecting sense of the adaptation of the plan of salvation to the necessities of my soul?

2. Looking at the work of faith, or the spirit's consciousness of an exercise appropriate to the principles and facts, as laid down in God's Word. Do I realize in my own soul their truth and power?

3. The special witness of the Spirit giving intensity to prayer, and praise, and bringing home with peculiar sweetness and power the truths of the Gospel. Am I thus exercised?

Let a man examine himself.

To this may be added growth. Where there is spiritual life, there is growth. Profession without vitality, like the picture of the child, does not increase in size. You have one, it may be, of your son, taken in his boyhood. It does not resemble him much now, for he has grown. There have been increase and development, and you love to compare his manly form with his former size. Are you growing in grace and in the love and knowledge of Christ Jesus? Are you advancing to the perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ?

Perhaps few Christians have an experience entirely uniform. Sometimes they are passing through the valley of Baca, and they call the place where they sojourn Bochim, or the place of weeping. Sometimes they are permitted to ascend the mount where Moses and Elias talked with Jesus, and they say "it is good to be here." Sometimes they walk in darkness, and see no light, yet still staying themselves on their covenant God, they cry, "why art

thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me. Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." He esteems even the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. He feels that if he could have all that this world can give, and be continued in a condition to enjoy it forever, he would be miserable to think this was to be all his portion. His prayer is, "O Lord, give me not my portion in time." He has a hope that he would not give for all the world, even if he could have it forever.

We do not say, that assurance of acceptance with God, and a title to everlasting life is essential to a true Christian; but it certainly greatly affects his comfort and efficiency. Some, we believe, have it to a good degree uniformly. Others, because of falling into sin, or neglect of duty, live much of their time in doubt. Some, moreover, because of the condition of their body, are always desponding. I have known some persons of good estate to be troubled with the thought that they would come to want, and on that account be unable to enjoy the competency they possessed. It is a morbid condition of the mental or moral system, owing, it may be, to physical disability. So it may be in regard to the spiritual forebodings. Such persons need to be dealt with very tenderly. Oh, said David, in view of the dangers that surrounded him, "I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul;"

but again, when stirring up his heart to praise God in view of past mercies, he exclaims, "I shall not die, but live to declare the works of the Lord."

And I am persuaded that true Christians might more generally possess the comfort of Scriptural assurance, were they more earnest and devoted. Then shall we know—if we follow on to know the Lord. "His going forth is prepared as the morning, and He shall come as the rain, as the latter and former rain upon the earth." Then,

> "Our cheerful song would oftener be,
> Hear what the Lord has done for me."

Where, reader, art thou? We shall all soon stand at the bar of God to receive our everlasting reward.

> "Years hurry quickly by,
> And we are fading too;
> And soon the year when we must die,
> Will come upon our view."

Let us be exhorted to be ready, "for in such an hour as we think not, the Son of man cometh." "Our days upon earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding."

Another year of our assembling here is departed, gone to give its account to Him who gave it. Much precious seed has been sown. Gospel truth has been uttered, and feebly and unskillfully it may be, yet God's own truth has been proclaimed. May God in mercy watch over it, water and make it to bring forth fruit a hundred fold to His own glory.

May young and old be savingly benefitted, and preacher and hearer be enabled to stand faithfully in their lot, and at last be able to say, "Lord, Thy pound hath gained ten pounds," and thus obtain an abundant entrance into the haven of rest, the kingdom prepared for the people of God. Even so, amen.

FINIS.

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